

HOW DO WE HELP THE NEXT GENERATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN  
WOMEN NEGOTIATE THE LABYRINTH AND RISE TO LEADERSHIP  
POSITIONS IN THE CHURCH?

A THESIS-PROJECT  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY  
WANDA D. FRAZIER-PARKER  
MAY 2015



To my mother, Jeanette Smith Raiford, Sunrise: June 9, 1926 – Sunset: October 9, 2014.

A loving mother, faithful to the call of God on her life as a preacher, missionary and pioneer of the gospel of Jesus Christ. She supported me with her prayers and encouraging words of “furnish God your life and He will bless you!” I love you, mom aka “Nana”.

## CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vii
CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING .....	1
CHAPTER 2 WHAT DO THE BIBLE AND CHURCH HISTORY SAY?.....	21
CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	40
CHAPTER 4 PROJECT DESIGN .....	54
CHAPTER 5 OUTCOMES .....	64
APPENDIX A INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS .....	86
APPENDIX B BIOGRAPHIES OF INTERVIEWEES: .....	87
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	100
VITA .....	105

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to those who diligently labored with me, loved, supported, prayed and contributed to the success of my thesis project to the acknowledgment and commencement of my doctorate degree. I am indebted to my husband, who encouraged me to return to school; with a keen insight of my destiny as a woman in ministry. His patience and unrelenting love tolerated my absence from home and church and for this I am eternally grateful. I appreciate my girls, Shelayna and Stephanie for always having confidence that I could do this. I thank my church and personal staff for allowing me the time and space to experience this journey.

I am especially indebted to Archbishop Alfred A. Owens, Presiding Prelate of Mt. Calvary Holy Church of America and his wife, my mentor, spiritual advisor and friend, Dr. Susie C. Owens for supporting me on every level of my life. Thank you for believing in me and for saving my life! I offer a special thanks to Dr. Claude Alexander who was an inspiration of my attending Gordon Conwell. I could not have survived this experience without the help of my Executive Assistant, Dr. Kimberly Walston, who is a gifted educator and multitalented administrator, her expertise in critiquing and editing from a framing and grammatical perspective and assisting in creating the charts and model for this project has been superb.

To my girlfriends in ministry, Dr. Sabrina Joyce Ellis, Dr. Toni Alvarado and First Lady Cheryl Wilkins, for praying me through when I didn't have the strength. I give special thanks to my siblings who had more confidence in me than I had in myself, I love you guys for tolerating me missing special family events and loving me through the

tough times. Finally, I thank my mother, who passed away before I completed the process, for giving me courage to fight and the strength to endure.

## ABSTRACT

Despite real progress, women remain rare enough in elite positions of power that their presence still evokes a sense of wonder. African American women in ministry, as in corporate America, must be prepared to approach the glass ceiling that still exists when maneuvering the labyrinth towards positions of authority in leadership. To prevent repeating cycles, African American women must prepare younger generations for the “approaching struggles” such as sexism and barriers based upon organizational biases. Five African-American women who have reached the highest position in Christian leadership, share their experiences that lead to penetrating the “stained glass ceiling.”

## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

The history of the Bible and its interpretation has been a history of silenced women. Women of the Bible have been silenced and women who have interpreted the Bible have been silenced. However, the history of the Bible and its interpretation has not been only a history of silencing women, it is also been a history of women refusing to be silenced.<sup>1</sup>

Younger female generations of African-Americans desiring leadership in African-American churches, who have witnessed mothers, sisters, aunts, and grandmothers denied leadership positions despite deserving promotion, may possess an unquenchable fire to access leadership. The embers of the internal fire grow as the statistics increase with each occurrence of equally qualified females blocked from leadership. The greater the passion, the persistence to silently strategize and plan better how to reach a goal denied their predecessors continues to grow. There is a younger generation of women desiring for their voices to be heard and valued on platforms and agenda where significant, life-changing decisions are made. After witnessing the challenges of their predecessors, a younger generation is refusing to be silenced or to be hindered as their predecessors. This generation will be heard.

However, will this generation's contributions be valued and positively impact the history of women in African-American churches? Will their push and passion be considered the result of arrogance and disrespect as they attempt to rise to leadership positions or simply their desire to use their gifts? This study has purposed to address the

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerald West, *Contextual Bible Study*. (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, 1983), 52.



research question, how do we help the next generation of African-American women negotiate the labyrinth and rise to leadership positions in African-American churches?

The study endeavors to share a model, adopted or developed, that trains a younger generation of African-American women how to address, cope, and successfully overcome the challenges as they seek to break through the stained glass ceiling by maneuvering the labyrinth; consequently, inferences may be drawn to explain the reasons approaching generations are directed to and seek employment in areas other than the church. Because the preacher ideology deemed ministry “a man’s or male dominated career,”<sup>2</sup> it is simple to understand why approaching generations of young women are choosing careers other than ministry, though carrying a divine calling for ministry and leadership.

In “Women and Clergywomen,” Joy Charlton asserts that “women who have taken on any field in the past decades have had to negotiate issues of gender, occupational structures and choices about how to live a meaningful life.”<sup>3</sup> Women who embrace careers in ministry despite the existent challenges must prepare for other limitations. Faith Wambura Ngunjiri and E. Ann-Cristo Baker emphasize that “women’s access to leadership positions and authority in organizations and society is limited by social norms, organizational cultures, and structures collectively referred to as the glass ceiling.”<sup>4</sup> “Ngunjiri and Baker continue that “the ‘stained glass ceiling’ refers to the

---

<sup>2</sup> Margaret Steward, David Steward, and Judith Dary, “Women Who Choose a Man’s Career: A Study of Women in Ministry,” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1983): 166.

<sup>3</sup> Joy Charlton, “Women and Clergywomen,” *Sociology of Religion* 61, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 423.

<sup>4</sup> Faith Wambura Ngunjiri and E. Ann-Cristo Baker, “Breaking the Stained Glass Ceiling: African Women’s Leadership in Religious Organizations,” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 5, no. 2 (April 2012): 1.

same phenomena in religious organizations, the barriers that keep women from attaining leadership positions and authority in churches and other religious institutions.”<sup>5</sup>

This study will use the term “stained glass ceiling” to mean barriers to women holding leadership positions in the church i.e. an ordained preacher, pastor and bishop. This study will also refer to the labyrinth as the maze of obstacles women face as they attempt to reach positions of leadership.<sup>6</sup> Though most research has focused on non-African-American culture, would these current challenges affect women in the African-American church? James Harris notes, “Women in the black church outnumber men by more than two to one; yet in positions of authority and responsibility the ratio is reversed.”<sup>7</sup> Consequently, Harris suggests African-American women in ministry must also be prepared to approach the stained glass ceilings that still exist in some denominations, religious organizations, and associations when navigating the labyrinth to positions of authority in Christian leadership. In the journal of Julia Foote written in *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women’s Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century Religion in North America*, her experience of being excommunicated supports this argument:

Many in the church were anxious to have me preach in the hall, where our meetings were held at that time, and were not a little astonished at the minister’s cool treatment of me. At length two of the trustees got some of the elder sisters to call on the minister and ask him to let me preach. His answer was: No, she can’t preach her holiness stuff here, and I am astonished that you should ask it of me. The sisters said he seemed to be in quite a rage. . . . There being no meeting of the society on Monday evening, a brother of the church opened his house to me, that I might preach, which displeased Mr. Beman and he appointed a committee to wait

---

<sup>5</sup> Ngunjiri and Baker, “Breaking the Stained Glass Ceiling.” 1.

<sup>6</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 1.

<sup>7</sup> James Henry Harris, “Practicing Liberation in the Black Church.” *The Christian Century*, (June 13-20, 1990): 600.

upon the brother and sister who had opened their doors to me, to tell them they must not allow any more meetings of that kind and that they must abide by the rules of the church, making them believe they would be excommunicated if they disobeyed him. . . .

This brother and sister withdrew from the church of Mr. Beman. I then held meetings in my own home; whereat the minister told members that if they attended them he would deal with them, for they were breaking the rules of the church. When he found that I continued the meetings, and that the Lord was blessing my feeble efforts, he sent a committee of two to ask me if I considered myself a member of his church. I told them I did and will continue to do so until I had done something worthy of dismembership. At this, Mr. Beman sent another committee with a note asking me to meet him with the committee, which I did. He asked me a number of questions. . . . One, however, I do remember: he asked if I were willing to comply with the rules of the discipline. To this I answered: Not if the discipline prohibits me from doing what God has bidden me to do; I fear God more than man. The next evening, one of the committee came to me and told me I was no longer a member of the church, because I had violated the rules of the discipline by preaching.

From his statements, many erroneous stories concerning me gained credence with a large number of people. At the time, I thought it my duty as well as privilege to address a letter to the Conference, which I took to them in person, stating the facts. . . . My letter was slightly noticed, and then thrown under the table. Why should they notice it? It was only the grievance of a woman, and there was no justice meted out to women in those days. Even ministers of Christ did not feel that women had any rights which they were bound to respect.<sup>8</sup>

Journalled accounts of African-American women's intense struggle, like that of Julia Foote, to operate in ministry at full potential demonstrate the necessity of preparing approaching generations for barriers based upon attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into a leading position. Without proper and advanced training, existing barriers may discourage approaching generations, resulting in avoidance of serving in ministry. Consequently, generation next may become generation absent, leaving Christendom deprived of some of its greatest resources. What is the most effective method to prepare the next generations?

---

<sup>8</sup> William L. Andrews, ed., *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women's Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century Religion in North America*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 205-207.

Providing the next generation with a thorough understanding to navigate the labyrinth responsibly will be essential to ensure that their ascensions have positive impact on their generations following and eliminate negative impact on the generations currently leading. At its core, it is important that younger generations know the true reason for navigating the labyrinth, being able to complete their kingdom assignment effectively, ultimately fitting into the larger plan of making more disciples in every nation – the Great Commission. Their release places more laborers in the vineyard to ensure that the Kingdom agenda is met, using their voice to amplify God’s voice in the earth.

With extensive evidence noting the use of women in Old Testament and New Testament, a need continues to exist that provides younger generations of females with the knowledge necessary to amply prepare for rise to leadership at the highest level in churches. For other ethnicities, employing standard models or paradigms may be effective as originally developed to help navigate the labyrinths faced blocking access to leadership positions. However, as learned from African-American church studies and historical accounts, the struggles for African-American females are different.<sup>9</sup> For example, labyrinth navigation model principles disclosed in Eagly and Carli’s *Through The Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* may provide insight regarding coping mechanisms and alliance building principles that strengthen collective and individual voice. However, the model must be customized for African-American females to include battles with racism in addition to an informed theology to be effective in African-American churches. Consequently, though models exist that are helpful,

---

<sup>9</sup> James Henry Harris. "Practicing Liberation in the Black Church." *The Christian Century*, (June 13-20, 1990): 600.

effective models must incorporate principles that inform, prepare and train African-American females how to successfully navigate the labyrinth from the base of an informed theology alongside experiences and arguments for racism and sexism specifically evident in the African-American church.

This research study seeks to determine if a model or curriculum exists for young African-American women who are called to ministry and desire to negotiate the leadership labyrinth that leads to the highest level of office in their denomination. If no model or curriculum exists in denominations, organizations, and Christian associations that embrace women in ministry and leadership, then this research will develop a model or guide that provides understanding on how to address, cope, and successfully overcome the stained glass ceiling. This knowledge will prevent younger generations from repeating the failures of their predecessors and promote wiser strategies for approaching and breaking through the stained glass ceiling in African-American churches.

Interviews with African-American women serving in upper echelons of leadership in the church will reveal the tenets and fundamentals that successful African-American female leaders used in their reformation or denomination or private-sector field(s). The results of the study should reveal the paths taken that lead to overcoming racism, sexism, patriarchal ideologies, traditions, and the misinterpretation of the authority of Scripture (which will be outlined in chapter 2).

### **The Stained Glass Ceiling**

There is a difference between the policy of including women and the practice of permitting them to lead. In a male-dominated society, women who exhibit leadership ability and have ambitions of leading encounter limited opportunities for advancement.

Women have been found to be “knowledgeable” of opportunities but without permission to access them—as if a ceiling separated them.

This image of an unexpected see-through obstruction was coined in the mid-1980s. Alice Sargent, a Fortune 500 consultant and author of *The Androgynous Manager*, told the *Washington Post* in 1987 that “women in corporate America are ‘bumping their heads on the glass ceiling.’”<sup>10</sup>

Glass ceilings indicate a limitation placed upon women regarding advancement into middle and upper echelons of leadership. This glass ceiling was employed to describe the exclusion of women from major, decision-making leadership roles based upon a lack of confidence in a woman’s capability to lead with authority.

The term “stained glass ceiling” is utilized because stained glass does not admit light easily. As light is observed through stained glass windows in church edifices, light is distorted due to imperfections in glass cuts and via the colored pieces of the structure, representative of the limiting interpretations colored by the experiences or fears of women not permitted to lead in the church. In addition, stained glass is opaque; unlike standard glass, stained glass is not transparent. Persons on one side must explain what exists on the other side. This opaque quality is the fundamental purpose and justification for developing a model or curriculum for approaching generations with a calling to lead above stained glass ceilings. Without models or books to chart their path in the African-American church, women in earlier generations had to find their own path. But now they must transform their experiences and lessons learned into teachable moments and

---

<sup>10</sup> Phrases, Sayings and Idioms, “Glass Ceiling Revisited,” accessed November 28, 2014. [www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin\\_board/22/messages/747.html](http://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin_board/22/messages/747.html).

extended classrooms of learning for training generations of women God has called to lead above the stained glass ceiling. Some in this generation of young women and the next generation have suggested in women's forums and conferences that it is not worth the sacrifice without a solid model or a "how to" resource that gives them step by step instructions in the maneuvering process. This is why this research is important.

From the days of slavery to twenty-first-century leadership, African-American women have transferred their learning, struggles, and wisdom to the approaching generations through stories, books, and other media. These teaching moments that are preparatory and guiding tools for the coming generations can be referred to as an extended classroom of learning. For African-American women the extended classroom becomes an incubator for supporting them in ministry and leadership in accordance with a sound, biblical, theological framework, as well as mental and emotional preparation to serve in the upper echelons of leadership in their denominations. Therefore, preparation and education are needed along with leadership and suggested effective models that will help facilitate and give increased visibility for the next generation of African American female leaders.

### **Leading Above the Stained Glass Ceiling**

There is no deficit of definitions for the term "leader." Library and bookstore shelves are overwhelmed with volumes of literature that define and attempt to define what a leader is across fields, platforms, or disciplines. Writers debate about leadership characteristics and roles, yet few argue over the need for leaders, no matter the definition, to be effective. Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby assert that effective leadership is the key to accomplishment:

Moreover while on any given day the people may accomplish more tasks than the leader will, the longer those people labor without the vision, guidance and support of a leader, the actual work they accomplish will deteriorate in quality, volume and relevance. Leaders do not do all of the work or even most of it. But effective leaders act as indispensable catalysts to ensure the right work is done.<sup>11</sup>

To this Robert Clinton adds, “The central task of leadership is influencing God’s people towards God’s purposes.”<sup>12</sup>

But what does an effective leader look like in the twenty-first century? Is there an image or model? Daniel Skidmore-Hess and Cathy Skidmore-Hess write that leadership images in modern societies are “a male-dominated endeavor.”<sup>13</sup> As leading women are introduced into the chronicles of history or legend, they are presented as “sexualized disruptors of the lives”<sup>14</sup> of their male counterparts and have been blamed for catastrophic events. Delilah, Bathsheba, Guinevere, and Helen are held up as cornerstone images and the face of “leadership coups, destructive plans and plots. Some women have been cast as the source of woes and sufferings that beset humanity as is said of Pandora and Greek myths, inclusive of Eve, at least according to the traditional Christian readings of Genesis.”<sup>15</sup>

The Skidmore-Hesses suggest that these images are passed down from an ancient world. Consequently, women learn from “believable voices and credible sources” in their

---

<sup>11</sup> Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2011), 24.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Clinton, *The Making of A Leader* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 203.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Skidmore-Hess and Cathy Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman: The Diminishing of the Prophetess Deborah,” *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 31, no. 1 (2012): 1.

<sup>14</sup> Skidmore-Hess and Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman,” 2.

<sup>15</sup> Skidmore-Hess and Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman,” 2.



lives that “virtuous women do not lead.”<sup>16</sup> Virtuous women “take the role of supporting actress, faithful helpmate, and companion to the masculine protagonist”<sup>17</sup> but do not lead—not in the courtroom, not in the boardroom, and especially not in the church.

In the twenty-first century, women are exhibiting the desire to lead from the front lines across multiple platforms. Bishop Vashti McKenzie, the first African-American woman to be consecrated bishop of the tenth episcopal district in the African Methodist Episcopal church, is an example of a woman with a desire to lead; she leads visibly, dispelling the myth that women cannot lead:

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie serves as the 117th elected and consecrated bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Her historic election in the year 2000 represents the first time in the over 200-year history of the AME Church, a woman had obtained the level of Episcopal office. The firsts continue as she served as the President of the Council of Bishops, Chair of the General Conference Commission and was the Host Bishop for the 49th Session of the General Conference of the AME Church in June 2012 with more than 30,000 in attendance.<sup>18</sup>

In *Not Without a Struggle*, Bishop McKenzie’s overview of female leadership in Roman, Greek, and African cultures shows that,

women exercised leadership behaviors and responsibilities in spite of structures of oppression, silence and seclusion, challenging and balancing historical presentations that oppose women’s leadership. She lifts from the pages of pre-Common Era history to the seventeenth century the accomplishments of Hypatia Thecla, Phoebe, and Cleopatra VII, Huldah the wife of Isaiah, Anna, Esther and others.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Skidmore-Hess and Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman,” 2.

<sup>17</sup> Skidmore-Hess and Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman,” 2.

<sup>18</sup> The Tenth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, “Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie,” 2000, accessed December 7, 2014, <http://www.10thdistrictame.org/bishop.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Angela Sims, “Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African-American Women,” *Journal of Religious Thought* 53-54 (1997): 154-55.

As prepared women acquired leadership roles, so future generations can study their journeys, gain the knowledge, and prepare mentally and emotionally to negotiate successfully the labyrinth into upper echelons of leadership.

### Negotiating the Labyrinth

There are many approaches to how women become leaders. Explicit principles, case studies, and anecdotes continually assert that the leadership labyrinth must be navigated carefully. Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli state,

Women are not so fortunate. For them, the route to leadership wends through a labyrinth, where they find themselves diverted—sometimes by doubts about their competence, sometimes by doubts about their warmth, and sometimes by resentment of their very presence.

Alice Eagly and Linda Carli investigate why women's paths to power remain difficult to negotiate. Eagly and Carli suggest that the glass ceiling is no longer a useful metaphor<sup>20</sup> and further propose “the labyrinth as a better image due to the varied blocks and limitations. However, throughout our analysis, we indicate that these problems are more intense in some leadership roles than others, particularly in roles ordinarily held by men and at higher levels in organizations.”<sup>21</sup>

While it is a “tough balancing act,” women are rising to the occasion.<sup>22</sup> Though impediments still exist on many levels of leadership, monolithic roadblocks no longer limit access to women who maneuver carefully through the labyrinth.

---

<sup>20</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007).

<sup>21</sup> Eagly and Carli, *Through the Labyrinth*, 117.

<sup>22</sup> Eagly and Carli, *Through the Labyrinth*, 163.

With excellent leaders in short supply, no group, organization, or nation can afford to restrict women's access to leadership roles, including the church.

*Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers* gives a laudable synopsis of how women evolved carefully in leadership:

From 1800-1900 women were capable of funding mission works of local ministries. Among the Southern Baptists, the Women's Missionary Union (from this point will be referred to as WMU), an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, remained a consistent voice for cross-cultural missions since its founding in 1888. The WMU pursued the single-minded goal of assisting missions by providing mission curricula and raising nearly half of the mission budget of the convention through the annual Lottie Moon Christmas offering, named for a Southern Baptist missionary woman in China who died of malnutrition in 1912. The strong women's organization with its single-minded focus missions propelled the Southern Baptist Convention into being the leading mission sending church in the United States in the late 20th century.

By the second half of the century, not only did women make up the majority of the mission force, both Catholic and Protestant, but they also constituted the majority of the global church. Missionary women in the 20th century were "gospel bearers" who rejoiced in the liberation they found, and shared with others, in Jesus Christ. As the third millennium of Christianity dawned, women of diverse cultures, ecclesial traditions and theological perspectives stand on the threshold of even greater contributions to God's mission in the world.

Yet the history of the 20th century women in missions reveals numerous tensions, difficulties and reversals because of "gender barriers." The paradox of Christian mission is that while missionary women affirm the good news that saves, frees, and liberates the patriarchal contexts in which it is practiced, continues to overshadow the message. Even as women have mentored men of other cultures for ministry, they (women) have been denied eldership themselves. At the height of successful women's denominational movements, they were under-cut in the name of bureaucratic efficiency and centralization.<sup>23</sup>

While women in corporate America have faced a labyrinth, so have women in the Church.

---

<sup>23</sup> Dana Robert, ed., *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 19, 27-28.

## African-American Women and the Labyrinth

Women, with unfeigned determination, championed causes to publicize the plight and limitations of women with ambition and leadership ability. Dorothy Height and a delegation of African-American women stood outside a Baptist church in Birmingham among hundreds and made speeches about their organization's mission to bring awareness and to strengthen the moral fiber of the country.

They spoke about racism, injustices, economic equality, and education.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the federal initiative commonly referred to as affirmative action was introduced in the 1960s to reverse the historic discrimination against race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in order to benefit underrepresented groups in areas of employment, education, and business.<sup>25</sup>

Carrying the mentality illustrated by Deborah Gray White in *Too Heavy a Load: A Black Woman's Defense of Themselves, 1894–1994*, that “a race could rise no higher than its women,”<sup>26</sup> African-American women allied with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other national agencies to advance the cause of inclusion of women in leadership by showing that disparities existed.<sup>27</sup>

African-American women, having made some progress, continued their efforts yet turned their attentions to the church for solace and support while developing

---

<sup>24</sup> Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–1963* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 1988), 800.

<sup>25</sup> United States Government, “Federal Register: A Daily Journal of the United States Government,” accessed August 4, 2014, <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/09/24/2013-21228/affirmative-action-and-nondiscrimination-obligations-of-contractors-and-subcontractors-regarding>.

<sup>26</sup> Deborah G. White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894–1994* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1999), 43.

<sup>27</sup> Scott Ferguson, “Women Are the Backbone of the NAACP,” *The Crisis* (Summer 2009).

organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) to champion rights. However, when women sought inclusion in leadership in the church, the role of African-American women would be cast differently than it was in Congress, boardrooms, and classrooms. When African-American women marched on Washington for civil rights to gain respect and equal opportunity that led to inclusion and leadership, Scott Ferguson recounts, women walked hand in hand with men in the fight for equality and equal opportunity for all. However, hands that unified in national struggles divided in local churches. African-American women would have to champion their cause without the hands of male counterparts that once provided support.

#### African American Women: A Historical Account

African American women played a key role in history but are not always acknowledged. For example, while Dana Robert articulates the role of women in missions, African American women are excluded. The women who are highlighted in Robert's work are limited to Caucasian women. There are few records that tell about the efforts and contributions of African-American women because "official accounts of the early years of the mission movement were written in terms of how the formal structures and the leadership of the missionary agencies (the sending agencies) were set up. Women played no role in any of that segment of history. Additionally, women were seldom included due to the definition of the word 'missionary.'"<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1992), xii.

### African-American Women in Ministry

African-American women were involved in completing mission works but not recognized formally.<sup>29</sup> During slavery, documents were found among the ruins to prove their service.<sup>30</sup> In fact, the beginning of missions happened in 1792, which is only a few years after the beginning of the founding of the United States.<sup>31</sup> Also, there are at least three known African-American women during the nineteenth century who struggled for equality in the church during an era when their voices were hushed. *Sisters of the Spirit* provides riveting portraits of their faith in God and his divine call, which revolutionized American religion and society. In 1836, *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee* challenged traditional female roles with an argument for women's spiritual authority.<sup>32</sup> Zilpha Elaw's *Memoirs* recount not only the author's struggle for legitimacy as a preacher but also her dangerous preaching missions to the slave states.<sup>33</sup>

After the Civil War, Julia Foote's *A Brand Plucked from the Fire* testifies to the growth of a more explicitly feminist message in black women's spiritual autobiography.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> The Emancipation Proclamation was not issued by President Abraham Lincoln and Congress until January 1, 1863.<sup>29</sup> In January 1865, Congress sent to the state legislatures to ratify what is now known as the Thirteenth Amendment, banning slavery in all US states and territories. During the civil rights movement of the 1960s, Lyndon B. Johnson invoked the Emancipation Proclamation, holding it up as a promise yet to be fully implemented.

<sup>30</sup> Bettye Collier-Thomas, Bettye. *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850 -1979*. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> Alan Neely, "Liele, George," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998), 400-1.

<sup>32</sup> Jarena Lee, *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee: An Account of Her Call to Preach the Gospel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1849).

<sup>33</sup> Zilpha Elaw, *Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, Ministerial Travels and Labours, of Mrs. Zilpha Elaw, an American Female of Colour: Together with Some Account of the Great Religious Revivals in America*. (London: Charter-House Lane, 1846).

<sup>34</sup> William L. Andrews, ed., *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women's Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century Religion in North America*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

The thought of leading a ministry in the context of Jim Crow laws was a monolithic leap of faith. These historical documents, though they are few, should imbue society and culture to recognize the value of trailblazers of black feminist missionary and literary tradition in America.

The church as well as society had its definition for the proper role of women, especially pertaining to the church. Despite these powerful examples of women missionaries, African American women faced barriers in aspiring to leadership roles in the church. Ignoring these barriers may inadvertently result in approaching generations of aspiring female leaders accepting and embracing a learned behavior of spiritual identity suppression. For this study, spiritual identity suppression is learning to suppress the authentic call to upper echelons of leadership as a result of another's thinking, opinion, or personal truths.

As the next generation of African-American women blindly trust and adopt the worldviews and opinions of male voices that they deem credible, the potential exists for them to be persuaded to believe leadership does not include women. For example, younger generations of African-American women trust male pastors or spiritual directors to provide sound advisement regarding any goals. For leaders with personal truths that may not align with the Scriptures, young women may unknowingly adopt an opinion as biblical truth. Consequently, young women may wrestle with a call to lead while facing the challenge of male leaders that may not support the female leadership. That wrestling is commonly initiated by what is commonly referred to as a transfer of deficit thinking<sup>35</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> Donna Ford and Tarek Grantham, "Providing Access for Culturally Diverse Gifted Students: From Deficit to Dynamic Thinking," *Theory into Practice* 4, no. 3 (Summer 2003).

Donna Ford and Tarek Grantham assert deficit thinking is defined by approaching persons with personal perceptions, unproductive thoughts of their abilities and weaknesses rather than on their strengths and potential.<sup>36</sup> As counterproductive female leadership statements emanate from credible sources, a young female's true, spiritual identity may be bottlenecked due to an internal suppression from deficit thinking transferred from male leadership. Deficit thinking from credible sources challenges a younger generation to question thoughts, usually resulting in the conclusion that younger thoughts cannot be correct compared to an older leader's thoughts. Without correction, it is possible that a repeated cycle of deficit thinking could permeate a generation, creating the idea that women should not lead.

A former assistant professor of congregational studies at Duke Divinity School, Darlene Wiggins, suggests that the "interpersonal, emotional or spiritual needs of church and community members were primary in the women's minds, ahead of systemic or structural injustices."<sup>37</sup> Consequently, Wiggins writes, lay women displayed ambivalence about the need for increased women clergy or women in pastoral leadership. Women appreciated and celebrated other women ministers, though lay women were not politically motivated to address any gender inequalities present within the church. Women were content serving on auxiliary boards or as deaconesses and trustees caring for the "social work of the church with a focus on individual spiritual transformation" prior to the twentieth century.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Donna Ford and Tarek Grantham, "Providing Access for Culturally Diverse Gifted Students: From Deficit to Dynamic Thinking," (Summer 2003).

<sup>37</sup> Marla Frederick. "Righteous Content: Black Women's Perspectives of Church and Faith. By Daphne C. Wiggins." *The North Star* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 1.

<sup>38</sup> Frederick, "Righteous Content: Black Women's Perspectives of Church and Faith. By Daphne C. Wiggins", 1.



For the few privileged who may become leaders in any minor capacity, operating at full potential and generating influence remains a distant hope. Though African-American women progressively advance in the black church in some areas, their miniscule representation in the upper echelons of leadership attests that vast numbers of this population continue to be hindered and distracted from leading visibly as a result of sexism. Collier-Thomas quotes Cheryl Townsend-Gilkes,

The black church currently is faced with a serious crisis of gender relations. More than any other African descended group in the New World, the black communities and churches in the United States have been shaped by the status and agency of women. This womanist infrastructure finds itself facing an emergent militant black manhood that is highly ambivalent about the importance of the church's women's history.<sup>39</sup>

### Generation Next

However, women do aspire to leadership positions in the church. Carol E. Becker proposes that the church is a supportive entity for “women who aspire to leadership, especially for those who know that they have much to contribute.”<sup>40</sup> Consequently, these “women who aspire to leadership look to the church with great hope.”<sup>41</sup>

If one accepts Becker's proposal, two questions arise. First, is the perspective of the church as a leadership-supportive environment for women shared among female aspirants from emerging generations, without noted intrinsic value, voice, and

---

<sup>39</sup> Bettye Collier-Thomas, *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African-American Women and Religion* (New York, NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1986), 478.

<sup>40</sup> Becker, Carol. *Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 60.

<sup>41</sup> Becker, *Leading Women*, 60.

contributions in ministry? If not, does the church have responsibility to plan for its work's endurance from the approaching generations?

Susie C. Owens, a noted scholar of secular and religious experience of understanding the complexities of sexism and classism pertaining to African-American women, shares her thoughts:

The contemporary church has a responsibility to plan for the perpetuity of its work. Beyond simply inspiring young ladies to know that they can achieve ministerial success, the inclusion of women in Church leadership helps to fulfill God's Word by preparing young women on whom God will pour out His Spirit. When this is done in a consistent manner throughout the Church world, we will see women, not only break through the glass ceiling—but soar above it.<sup>42</sup>

To continue its work, the church needs to prepare aspiring leaders, male and female. However, because it is common for women in leadership to experience sexism, it is essential to educate the next generation of women who aspire to visible leadership roles in the church.

Blackaby and Blackaby suggest that sound, strategic leaders are rare.<sup>43</sup>

Christendom cannot afford to inhibit the development, progression, and promotion of stable leadership on the basis of sexism, imbalanced hermeneutical interpretation, and tradition, all common barriers to female leaders.

Therefore, leadership paradigms should be developed to prepare and educate aspiring leaders equally, male and female, for the benefit of Christendom and society.

---

<sup>42</sup> Susie C. Owens, *Soaring Above the Ceiling: Developing Successful Female Leaders* (Winston-Salem, NC: MacPublishing, 2014), 94-95.

<sup>43</sup> Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2011).

As a result, it is essential to educate the next generation of African-American women who aspire to be the future voices in visible leadership roles in the church. These young women must see the authentic landscape of the women who paved the way through obscurity, having their lives threatened and finding ways to support what they knew to be God's call upon their lives.

With the great divide noted among men and women regarding leadership in African-American churches, the challenge begins with a factor that is not prevalent in the secular world: the Bible and the interpretation of Scripture. For decades, authors, philosophers, and religious leaders have posed varied arguments that center around the following questions:

1. Does the Bible teach a hierarchical structuring of male and female relationships?
2. Are women in leadership positions in the Bible?
3. Do women in the Bible assume the same leadership roles as men?
4. Does the Bible limit women from filling certain leadership roles?<sup>44</sup>

Volumes of research present solid arguments, pro and con, to answer these questions. However, when the Bible is used an absolute authority in difficult decision making, the most important question is what the Bible says. This matter will be addressed in chapter 2.

---

<sup>44</sup> Holly Catterton Allen, Deborah Hinkel, Joy Fagan, Robbie Castleman, and Susan Payne. "Two Views on Women in Ministry," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 2 (2006): 373.

## CHAPTER 2

### WHAT DO THE BIBLE AND CHURCH HISTORY SAY?

This chapter outlines the biblical framework and discusses the Bible's position on women in ministry from creation, the book of Joel, and the teachings of Jesus and Paul. Additionally, the position of the early church on women in ministry and leadership roles is presented from antiquity throughout the modern missionary movement and until the present.

If one accepts a reverent view of the Bible as God's written Word, irrespective of human evaluation or response to its writings, the Bible "must be considered the final authority in every matter of individual faith, corporate confession, ecclesiastical polity, and personal practice."<sup>1</sup> Improper interpretation of the Bible's truths may ascribe an assumption of biblical authority that is oppressive rather than life-giving, especially in the consideration of the women leading in home, church, or society. Consequently, women who learn biblical truths for life decisions from persons with improper or imbalanced interpretations may believe that biblical authority "must mean accepting subordinate status in church, home, and society. The reality is far different."<sup>2</sup> Unbiased examination of the Bible illustrates that God "considers women and men equally created in the image of God,"<sup>3</sup> according to Genesis 1:26-28 KJV (commonly referred to as ontological equality), and "equally morally and spiritually accountable,"<sup>4</sup> according to Romans 4:12.

---

<sup>1</sup> Catherine Clark Kroeger, Mary Evans, and Elaine Storkey, eds., *Study Bible for Women: The New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1985), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Kroeger, Evans, and Storkey, *Study Bible for Women*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Kroeger, Evans, and Storkey, *Study Bible for Women*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Kroeger, Evans, and Storkey, *Study Bible for Women*, 5.

Additionally, as women accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, they are “equally redeemed, restored and called to serve their one Lord,”<sup>5</sup> as 2 Corinthians 5:16-20 attests. “Scripture also records human case histories as examples for us to heed.”<sup>6</sup> Women who learn of bad girls of the Bible, such as Jezebel and Herodias, as primary examples of women’s inclusion in the Scriptures may avoid embracing the idea that women can be credible leaders or effective in ministry in any capacity.<sup>7</sup> The bad girls of the Bible, along with other examples such as that of heresy in the church of Ephesus, give society and the church permission to continue marginalizing women. However, a balanced approach to examining the Scriptures includes the positive examples of Deborah the judge, Huldah the prophet, Esther the advocate, and Ruth the protagonist. Women aware of the Scriptures’ positive female leaders can challenge any restriction on women leading visibly and influentially alongside men in ministry, because the Bible showcases women in diverse roles.

### **What the Bible Says**

Does the Bible limit women from having authority, fulfilling certain leadership roles, actively engaging in the work of ministry on any level in the church, or exercising their spiritual gifts? Several Scriptures are the basis for this discussion: Genesis 1:26-28; Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 14:33-35; 1 Timothy 2:12; Titus 1:5-9. Because there are varied approaches used in the search for the answers to these questions, Craig Keener

---

<sup>5</sup> Kroeger, Evans, and Storkey, *Study Bible for Women*, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Kroeger, Evans, and Storkey, *Study Bible for Women*, 6.

<sup>7</sup> Liz Curtis Higgs, *Bad Girls of the Bible: And What We Can Learn from Them* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 1999), 7.

warns that no matter one's position, one must be mindful of contextualization.<sup>8</sup> Keener writes that when one applies Pauline principles to situations that were transcultural, one needs to acknowledge that those principles would have to be reapplied in different ways in different cultural settings. Keener further asserts that all biblical passages may be for all times, but all passages are not for all circumstances. This is the approach of contextualization, ensuring that persons do not prejudice their interpretation of the Bible by using it to legitimize personal, prior agendas.<sup>9</sup> Hence, it is imperative to be cautious when applying specific restrictions and using negative case histories to create foundational truths.

### Genesis 1: Ontological Equality

Ontological equality suggests that God created all persons equal.<sup>10</sup> The ontological equality of man and woman is universally accepted in history and Scripture within the scholarly writings of commentators that deal responsibly with Genesis 1. In Genesis 1:1-25, God assigned limits to the firmament, water, and the earth. He set boundaries to the process of reproduction to preserve the integrity of each species: they produce "after their kind". He gave celestial bodies for signs and for seasons and for days and years.<sup>11</sup> He established the sun to rule by day and the moon by night.

---

<sup>8</sup> Craig Keener, *Paul, Women, and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Keener, *Paul, Women, and Wives*, 5.

<sup>10</sup> Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Discovering Biblical Equality—Complementarity Without Hierarchy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 306.

<sup>11</sup> Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about Women's Place in Church and Family* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006).

He prescribed in detail human rulership over fish, birds, cattle, and creeping things.<sup>12</sup> The whole created universe, from stars in space to fish in the sea, is carefully organized in a hierarchy of order that is meticulously defined in Genesis 1:1-25. Upon closer examination, there is no indication in Genesis 1:26-28 that such a hierarchy was to exist between man and woman. “A biblical understanding of human equality should begin with Genesis 1:26-28, where women and men together and without distinction are declared to be created in God’s image and are given authority over all creation. In both their being (the divine image) and their calling (authority and dominion) men and women are creationally equal.”<sup>13</sup> Woman was not to be subordinate or inferior to man but to be equal and similar on several levels, as well as a helper or helpmeet to man.

After reading that tiered organization is intrinsic to creation, it becomes increasingly significant that God would not define the hierarchy of man over woman. Absent from the text is any record that God intended the man to rule over the woman. No reference is made in Genesis 1 to authority roles between the man and woman; in a text permeated with the concept of hierarchical organization, the Bible tells us their relationship was to be one of mutuality in equality.<sup>14</sup> Aida Besancon Spencer emphasizes this mutuality in equality by highlighting the Septuagint’s translation of Genesis 2:20 “with a different but parallel word, *homoios*, which means of the same nature, like,

---

<sup>12</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*.

<sup>13</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 306.

<sup>14</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*.

similar. Within the general fabric of likeness, *homoios* also signifies equality in force and equality of rank.”<sup>15</sup>

William Swartley further supports the argument and affirms that sexual differentiation does not dictate social roles. Swartley notes that both sexes were created biologically and psychologically capable for parenthood. Both were also given what theologians called the cultural mandate: both sexes share in the call of dominion, but neither is given priority over the other and neither is more godlike. The fact that both are created in God’s image bestows upon humanity inestimable worth.<sup>16</sup>

William Webb asserts that equality carries sociological and redeeming implications:

Given the radical nature of Paul’s neither male nor female pronouncement within its original setting, there should be little doubt that we ought to champion the value of equality to its fullest. If some kind of male prominence/honor value be sustained, juxtaposed in light value of Scripture, we would then apply the male creative-order prominence principle in a way that would have the least detrimental effect upon male-female equality.<sup>17</sup>

### Genesis 2: Functional Equality

However, a closer examination of the biblical record of creation and the fall in Genesis 2 exposes scholarly separation in thought on the issue of functional equality. Clearly, the Bible teaches that man and woman were created in God’s image for the purpose of oneness, community, and unity, as confirmed in Genesis 1:27-28. Additionally, this

---

<sup>15</sup> Aida Bensaon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985), 26.

<sup>16</sup> Williams Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War, and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), 153.

<sup>17</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 240.



oneness is inclusive of all people, on all levels of Christian ministry, leadership, and authority, according to Galatians 3:28.

Biblical scholars promote two different theological positions: complementarianism and egalitarianism. In the context of this discussion of women pastors and elders, complementarianism is the position that the man and the woman in the church complement each other with their different callings and gifts. Complementarianism states that though gifts in both women and men overlap, there are biblically designated roles that do not. Both men and women can balance the books, be ushers, cook, and take care of children.

But complementarianism posits that a woman is not to be an elder or pastor because those positions are prohibited to women by Scripture. In marriage, complementarianism asserts men and women are both of equal, intrinsic value before God with equal importance within the marriage. However, they have different, complementary roles or functions; the husband is the spiritual leader in the family. Essentially, men are uniquely extended the highest leadership positions in both the home and church, and women perform lower tasks that generally support submission to men.

The egalitarian position, by contrast, teaches equality in every area of service within the church, including being an elder and pastor. Therefore, a woman is as fully qualified as a man would be to hold the office of elder, bishop, pastor, or deacon. In terms of family roles and responsibilities, egalitarian views of marriage support equality in marriages is without regard to specific gender roles. The husband and the wife decide to lead the family collectively and emphasize mutual submission to each other.

In *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, Linda L. Belleville writes that “traditionalists claim that male leadership is intrinsic to God’s creation of male and female; dominion of one over the other was not the intent. This is gender dysfunction, not gender normalcy.”<sup>18</sup> Gender dysfunction entered the picture through human choice, not divine mandate. It is a sad state of affairs when one must seek biblical warrant for gender hierarchy in male-female relationships when that dysfunction resulted from disobeying God.<sup>19</sup> The perspective of this writer is that of Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, noted egalitarian co-editor of *Discovering Biblical Equality – Complementarity Without Hierarchy*, who writes, “since the persons of the Trinity have oneness of will, and men and women do not, the relationship of the Father and Son within the trinity cannot be used as an illustration supporting the subordination of women.”<sup>20</sup>

Despite differences, the church should remain loyal and true to the basic tenets and biblical principles that express the oneness, likeness, and unity of God through man and woman. Until men and women arrive at a consensus on the role and place of women in home, church, and society, the barriers and divisions will continue. Christians must always keep in mind that God is more image-driven than gender-driven. God should not be defined within the nature of gender differentiations.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Linda L. Belleville et al., *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 25.

<sup>19</sup> Linda L. Belleville et al., *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, 35.

<sup>20</sup> Hedburg, Nancy. *Women, Men and the Trinity: What Does It Mean To Be Equal?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 16.

<sup>21</sup> Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*.

### Genesis 3: Community, Oneness, and Equality

Community is explicitly the coming together in unity. Gilbert Bilezikian, in *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness*, challenges the idea that the total definition is deep within the being of God, his existence prior to any of his works, when he writes, “The Trinity is involved in community as the originators from the beginning. The Word is completely identified with God; presented as executor.”<sup>22</sup> When discussing community and oneness in creation, Bilezikian notes that man was alone and God created out of him woman, a suitable helper, a helpmeet, which further means “rescuer for the state of affairs,” as discussed in Genesis 2:20. Bilezikian states that “woman was the necessary counterpart of man for making community.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the purpose of God in creating woman was fulfilled. And woman should not be reduced to a mere complement, better half, or an addition to man’s selfish and sufficient life. Man and woman were created for making of the community of oneness. Community is the nature of God. It flows out of him and is a gift to humanity from him. Thus, believers must be cognizant and individually attentive to God as the originator of oneness. Bilezikian describes this as the “centrality of oneness.”<sup>24</sup>

When the fall took place, separation from God was instantaneous and oneness was lost. But God’s intent was never that oneness would not be restored again. In the New Covenant, Jesus ultimately restores the woman in equality and, from this

---

<sup>22</sup> Gilbert Bilezikian, *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness: Community 101* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 16-17.

<sup>23</sup> Bilezikian, *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness*, 20-21.

<sup>24</sup> Bilezikian, *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness*, 27.

researcher's perspective, to rulership as one with God and with man.<sup>25</sup> When one looks at the cross horizontally and vertically, one sees in the relationship between God and humanity and in humans with each other, relationship and oneness at its best. This is community in perfection.<sup>26</sup>

### Women in Leadership in the Old Testament

In the Bible, women are found in leadership roles. Typically, in the Old Testament, they did not go directly into battle but arduously and strategically worked in times of conflict (e.g., Deborah as judge, Esther as advocate, and Huldah as prophet).

#### Deborah

Deborah, a judge and prophetess of the nation of Israel, was given uncommon wisdom and knowledge. Deborah's prophetic gift awakened her nation from lethargy and despair to arise and fight with Barak. Deborah prophesied Israel's victory against Sisera. The book of Judges demonstrates the leadership of Deborah through Barak's confirmation of refusing to enter battle unless Deborah accompanied him. Judges 4:16 indicates God honored female leadership, for not one man was left of Sisera's army; only Sisera escaped. He was later killed by a woman, Jael. All happened just as Deborah had prophesied.

#### Esther

Esther is one of only two books of the bible named for women. (The other is Ruth.) The book of Esther demonstrates God's sovereign control and concern for his people. Instead of using male leaders to protect his people, God uses a woman who

---

<sup>25</sup> Bilezikian, *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness*.

<sup>26</sup> Bilezikian, *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness*.

would become queen. With unlimited choices to secure victory against an enemy, God confirms that a woman will be a crucial part of his sovereign plan to save the lives of his chosen people. God's choice is spotlighted in this question from her uncle Mordecai in Esther 4:14: "If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?" Learning of the edict created by Haman's deceptive acts, Esther takes center stage as an influential woman who saves a people with an unselfish gesture. God honors Esther's courage to risk her life to save a people from genocide. Esther's leadership role and influence are clearly included in the plan of God.

#### Huldah

Limited information is given about Huldah, though her prophetic word is clearly noted as divinely revealed. Huldah counsels any who wished to inquire of the Lord. When the lost book of the law is found, Hilkiah the priest requests the counsel of Huldah rather than that of Jeremiah, who was her contemporary. Subsequent to confirming the authenticity of the lost book, Huldah prophesies national ruin because of the nation's disobedience to the commands of God in 2 Chron. 34:22-33. Huldah's prophetic message and the public reading resulted in revival and reform led by King Josiah.

#### Women as Prophets

There is clear recognition of woman's full identity and purpose in community and Christian ministry with leadership authority. Joel 2:28 says, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy . . . and on my maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days." Therefore,

Joel 2:28 suggests that women are equally and universally significant as prophets in the plan of God for his church and his kingdom.

### How Jesus Viewed Women

“A closer look at Scripture demonstrates that women are honored, affirmed and cared for by Paul and Jesus. Women are not second class individuals, but image bearers in the eyes of God.”<sup>27</sup> While male and female patronage was known and accepted in Jewish circles, women teachers and preachers were not. Traditionalists argue this is the definitive reason for excluding women from leading men. However, what they overlook is that Jesus did not exclude women for theological reasons.<sup>28</sup>

Anna, one of the first prophetesses in the New Testament, dedicated herself to attend to the ministry in the temple according to Luke 2:37-38. Anna proclaimed Jesus to all those who had an expectation of a redeemer in Jerusalem. God gave his approval and divine authority for this role to women. Through her loyalty and dedication to God, working in the temple and spreading the gospel of Jesus who would ultimately be the redeemer, her gift to give hope and life to community positioned her for this exceptional calling and of course the sovereignty of God being inclusive of women in this position.

The Samaritan woman who met Jesus at the well became a vibrant witness for Jesus Christ according to John 4:1-42. In speaking with her, Jesus broke through Jewish customs and laws. The Samaritan woman had a missionary role. In ancient times and first century Judaism, women's roles were significantly limited. The Rabbis taught a

---

<sup>27</sup> Sharon James, “Does the Bible Demean Women?” *The Apologetics Study Bible, Holman Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), 730.

<sup>28</sup> Linda Belleville et al., *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, 45.

strict separation of the sexes, and they even viewed conversations with a woman as a serious threat to a man's spirituality.<sup>29</sup>

The New Testament mentions Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna, among others, who traveled with Jesus and the twelve disciples, providing for them out of their financial means in Luke 8:1-3. Following the arrest of Jesus, several women witnessed Jesus' death and prepared his body for burial according to Matt 27:55-56.

According to Matthew's account, women served as the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection. It is further suggested that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Lesser and Joses (also called "the other Mary"), Joanna, Salome the wife of Zebedee and the mother of the apostles James and John, and "other women" were God's chosen witnesses, for the angel of the Lord tells the women, 'go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead' in Matthew 28:7, with a cross reference found in Mark 16:1, 7; Luke 24:1-10. Jesus solidifies their inclusion in biblical history by entrusting women to be the initial carriers of significant and cherished truths according to John 20:17-18, even though Jewish tradition deemed "the judgment of women as a rule [is] weaker."<sup>30</sup>

Aida Besancon Spencer writes,

Women functioned as witnesses or apostles who had been with Jesus, were eyewitnesses of the resurrection and were sent by Jesus to proclaim the good news. As apostles sent by God, the twelve Jewish men looked back to the old covenant, whereas the multinumbered women and men looked forward, beyond the resurrection to the new covenant. When scholars disqualify women from church leadership by using the twelve male apostles as precedents, they ignore the significance both of their number (twelve) and of their Jewishness, and they

---

<sup>29</sup> Sue Richards and Larry Richards, *Every Woman in the Bible*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1999), Introduction.

<sup>30</sup> Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, eds., *Discovering Biblical Equality – Complementarity Without Hierarchy*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 139 – 140.

dismiss the importance of women's functioning as apostles and of Junia's being titled an apostle. Why choose the Twelve and not, for example, the loyal Galilean women as paradigmatic of all leadership, since after Pentecost the rest of the Twelve (after Judas) are not replaced after their deaths in Acts (e.g., Acts 12:2)? If their particular ministry was not perpetuated, how can the Twelve serve as a precedent for church leadership today? We do, however, have the precedents of men and women who were commissioned to preach the gospel. Therefore we should emphasize what Jesus emphasized in his teachings: humble mutual service, not male-female distinction in leadership.<sup>31</sup>

### Women in Leadership in the New Testament

In the New Testament, Paul mentions women who served alongside him in ministry (e.g., Lydia, Phoebe, Priscilla, and Junia):

The titles that Paul gives to the women he mentions imply leadership positions: deacon (Romans 16:1), leader (Romans 16:2), my fellow worker in Christ Jesus (Romans 16:3; Philippians 4:3), and apostle (Romans 16:7). Furthermore, Paul describes them as fulfilling functions associated with church leadership: they worked hard in the Lord (Romans 16:6, 12) and contended at my side in the cause of the gospel (Philippians 4:3). Over two-thirds of the colleagues whom Paul praises for their Christian ministry in Romans 16:1-16 – seven of the ten – are women. His partner Luke adds that women prophesied (Acts 21:9) and Priscilla explained the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:26).<sup>32</sup>

### Lydia

A resident of Philippi, Lydia met with other women for prayer by the riverside because there were few or no synagogues in Philippi. Perhaps the other women looked to her for spiritual direction.<sup>33</sup> She was the first European to hear Paul's message, believe, and be baptized; her witness led to additional converts. Subsequently, she served alongside Paul in ministry. Her trade—a seller of purple—gave her the means to support

---

<sup>31</sup> Pierce and Groothuis, *Discovering Biblical Equality*, 140.

<sup>32</sup> Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 68.

<sup>33</sup> Sue Poorman Richards and Larry Richards, *Every Woman in the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 242.



Paul's ministry. Her zeal to be hospitable to visiting missionaries established her home as the place of fellowship in Philippi. This fact suggests leadership skills and authority while working in unity with Paul.

#### Phoebe

Phoebe is noted in Romans 16:2 as a deacon, term that refer to one who leads or cares for or helps. The term suggests that Phoebe is a woman with leadership responsibilities and the purpose to care for others. Phoebe's role of caring for others manifests itself through an additional responsibility, that of servant of the Lord. Phoebe's service and ministry efforts were not privately heralded but sanctioned by the congregation at Cenchrea. Deacons offered sound teaching and had proven administrative abilities according to 1 Tim 3:9, 12. The women serving alongside Paul are educated, equipped, commendable, and diligent in the work of ministry.

#### Priscilla

Though Paul is conscious of the bias against women's contributions in ministry, he fervently works to ensure that women receive recognition for their diligence in ministry. Priscilla, the wife of Aquila and a female minister, is recognized for risking her life for Paul. Priscilla and Aquila are sponsors of a house church in Rome. Because they share in the same work as Paul according to Rom 16:9, 21, Paul refers to Priscilla and Aquila as fellow workers.

The evidence of a woman being empowered and equipped to teach women, men, and children in the same setting is affirmed in the Scriptures. Priscilla and her husband taught Apollos; Acts 18:26-28 says "when Aquila and Priscilla heard him they took him aside and explained [taught] to him the way of God more accurately; showing from the

scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.” Furthermore, women were permitted to pray and prophesy in meetings of the Corinthian church.

#### Junia

Junia is an apostle according to Romans 16:7. Junia was imprisoned with Paul. Consequently, Paul knows Junia intimately enough to make a recommendation regarding her. Romans 16 confirms that Paul publicly supported women in visible leadership roles.

#### Other Women

In Paul’s letter to the church in Rome, he greets several of his co-laborers (missionaries) of the gospel; Tryphena and Tryphosa are mentioned in his greeting. The word translated as “labor” in Romans 16:12 is derived from a Greek verb meaning “to work hard.” Little more is written about Tryphena and Tryphosa and their contributions as missionary companions to Paul. However, the fact that their names are mentioned and that he commends them as “hard workers” in the work of the Lord is significant.

Philippians 4:2-3 affirms Euodia and Syntyche contended with Paul in the cause of the gospel: “I implore Euodia and Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.” “The extent of Paul’s affirmations of women in his circle of ministry stands in stark contrast with the typical attitude toward women in Paul’s day.”<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Craig Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 68.

### How Paul Viewed Women

There is evidence in the Scriptures that both men and women and even husband/wife pairs were active in teaching and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.<sup>35</sup> Dorcas (Tabitha) was in a disciple and noted deaconess in the church according to Acts 9:36, and Philip's daughters exercised their prophetic gifts and followed in the footsteps of their father in Acts 2:8-9. "Paul's use of women in ministry demonstrates women are men's equals spiritually and intellectually. Therefore, they are capable of the same spiritual and intellectual roles. They are capable of fulfilling the same calls as men and can serve alongside their husbands as equal partners in marriage and ministry."<sup>36</sup>

### The Patristic Period

It seems that women functioned as presbyters or baptized and celebrated the Lord's Supper in the patristic period.<sup>37</sup> But fragments of information from archaeological discoveries suggest a wide role for women in the early post-apostolic churches.<sup>38</sup> Some Greek-language tombstones refer to women as presbyters, although it is not certain whether these women were presbyters in Jewish or Christian congregations.<sup>39</sup> As churches moved into the second century, women's leadership was increasingly denounced (suggesting that women were active in leadership in some places).

---

<sup>35</sup> James E. Talmage. "Women in the Scriptures: The Greatest Champion of Woman and Womanhood Is Jesus Christ," *Daughters in My Kingdom* (October 2012).

<sup>36</sup> Keener, *Paul, Women, and Wives*, 225. See also the section "Women in Leadership in the New Testament" above.

<sup>37</sup> Paul Bradshaw, "Women and Baptism in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 20, no. 4, (Winter 2012): 641.

<sup>38</sup> Bradshaw, "Women and Baptism in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*," 641.

<sup>39</sup> Bradshaw, "Women and Baptism in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*," 641.

By the end of the second century, writings by pastors and theologians and books on discipline and church order began to condemn such activities.

Manuals such as the *Didascalia Apostolorum*<sup>40</sup> and *Apostolic Church-Order*<sup>41</sup> prohibit women from baptizing or conducting the Lord's Supper.

Ruth Tucker and Walter Liefeld emphasize that by A.D. 300 the church's concept of ministry had shifted toward a professional hierarchy. The church took its organizational model from the civil service of the Roman Empire.<sup>42</sup> More and more power was vested in the offices of bishop and presbyter/elder or priest, and those who filled them were selected by other members in positions of power. Because of this bias against placing women in positions of authority, it became impossible for a Christian community to select women as bishops and presbyters/elders.<sup>43</sup>

### Women in Mission

"The stereotype of the woman missionary has ranged from that of the longsuffering wife, characterized by the epitaph, 'Died, Given Over to Hospitality', to that of the spinster in her unstylish dress and wire-rimmed glasses, alone somewhere for thirty years teaching heathen children," writes Dana Robert.<sup>44</sup> Like all caricatures, those of the exhausted wife and frustrated old maid carry some truth:

---

<sup>40</sup> Bradshaw, "Women and Baptism in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*," 641.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2d ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 80.

<sup>42</sup> Ruth Tucker and Walter Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987).

<sup>43</sup> Tucker and Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church*.

<sup>44</sup> Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1992), xvii.

The underlying message of the stereotypes is that missionary women were perceived as marginal to the central tasks of mission. Rather than being remembered for preaching the gospel, the quintessential male task, missionary women were noted for meeting human needs and helping others, sacrificing themselves without plan or reason, all for the sake of bringing the world to Jesus Christ.<sup>45</sup>

Historical evidence, however, gives lie to the belief that women missionaries were and are doers but not thinkers, reactive secondary figures rather than proactive primary ones. It is noted that the first American women to serve as foreign missionaries in 1812 were among the best-educated women of their time.<sup>46</sup>

Not only did women missionaries go abroad with particular theologies to share, but also their identities as women caused them to develop gender-based mission theories. Early nineteenth-century women seldom wrote theologies of mission, but they wrote letters and kept journals that reveal a thought world and set of assumptions about women's roles in the missionary task. The activities of missionary wives were not random. They were part of a mission strategy that gave women a particular role in the advancement of the reign of God.

### **Conclusion**

Biblical authority should always have preeminence over traditions, religious opinion, customs, and cultural philosophies. The Bible's truth must be the final authority and have the last word, not only in gender-specific matters and associated roles but in all matters affecting faith, life, and God's kingdom. Hence, "women will be greatly encouraged by the inclusive ministry practices of Jesus, Paul and the New Testament church. In Luke 11:27-28, Jesus makes it clear that God's blessing is not gender-restrictive, and Paul's letter to the Galatians urges all believers to stand firm in their new freedom in Jesus Christ in Galatians 5:1.

---

<sup>45</sup> Robert, *American Women in Mission*, Introduction.

<sup>46</sup> Robert, *American Women in Mission*, Introduction.

Women who know Scripture will reject any notion that their gender limits full redemptive freedom.”<sup>47</sup> This study seeks to ensure that the approaching generations know the proper interpretation of the Scriptures, so they can ask God to remove barriers to their active role in spreading the gospel as women work together with men to help build Christ’s church, thus fulfilling the Great Commission.

---

<sup>47</sup> Catherine Kroeger, Mary Evans and Elaine Storkey, ed., *Study Bible for Women: The New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 6.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The study discusses four models useful in preparing women to navigate and overcome challenges and barriers: (1) the labyrinth model as discussed by Eagly and Carli in *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* from the corporate America perspective; (2) the service model of women proven from the pew to the pulpit, (3) a model of Feminist Theology and Gender Justice; and finally (4) a redemptive hermeneutics model. The presentation of models in the study are examined to unearth and understand the elements and fundamentals required to develop a model to assist younger generations of African-American women in the Pentecostal church to reach the highest level of leadership, thereby effectively overcoming sexism and other traditional barriers that have been longstanding hindrances to accessing upper echelons of leadership.

#### The Labyrinth Model

Alice Eagly and Linda Carli's examination of women's journey to upper echelons of leadership in *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth about How Women Become Leaders* direct the attention to the symbol of the labyrinth, a maze of challenges, obstacles, hindrances and hurdles, to illustrate the path used by some women to reach leading influential positions in organizations and companies. Eagly and Carli advocate that women are disadvantaged and not considered for leadership as a result of the mental images of what defines a leader. Usually, masculine attributes, the mental images often limit and sometimes disqualify women from top tiered roles. Utilizing a collaborate style of leadership, according to Eagly and Carli, in a hierarchically structured organization

often disadvantages women. They also suggests that women opt out of leadership roles to care for their families. Though the labyrinth exists, Eagly and Carli suggest that an increasing number of women are successfully maneuvering the labyrinth to attain top tiered leadership positions. With all of the givens, how do women successfully navigate the labyrinth? Eagly and Carli assert that women must learn to “cope in the workplace,” despite how challenging the environment may be, in addition to their personal lives.<sup>1</sup> Eagly and Carli suggest that women must be willing to be proactive in acknowledging their successes and endeavoring to “feel authentic”<sup>2</sup> in their leadership roles. Second, Eagly and Carli suggest that women must learn to “negotiate effectively,”<sup>3</sup> though this can be difficult to learn to do in an environment unsupportive of female leadership. Moreover, with Eagly and Carli’s assertion that women lead differently from men, noting women as democratic, participative and collaborative leaders and men as autocratic, women may need to increase their investment of time in honing these skills. Essentially, women must become excellent and effective negotiators. A final point discussed with urgency, Eagly and Carli affirm that women must build social capital. Women must ensure to connect and network with other men and women throughout the organization to build an alliance and community of support as women move up the ranks in visibility and leadership.

According to Eagly and Carli, continuing to utilize these labyrinth navigation strategies will help women be better prepared and positioned to forge ahead as they

---

<sup>1</sup> Alice Eagly and Linda Carly. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 161.

<sup>2</sup> Alice Eagly and Linda Carly. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*, 161.

<sup>3</sup> Alice Eagly and Linda Carly. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*, 167.



continue on the path to becoming “path makers of social change,”<sup>4</sup> leaving a path for others following with identical aspirations and goals. In summary, this is a great model for corporate America but not necessarily the church and perhaps not for African American females. While Eagly and Carli discuss genderism they don’t discuss sexism and racism that African American females encounter even in corporate America, let alone the church. The labyrinth itself is a great symbol that could be used in the church as an example of how to now navigate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to higher positions. The obstacles to how a woman leads versus a man is a barrier in the church; creating an alliance and networking with men in the church has not been modeled enough to suggest this as a viable model for African American females. With some tailoring to the African American church there are a few pieces of this model that could be implemented along with other models. To adopt this model explicitly would further divide the gap between women in ministry and men in leadership positions in the African American church.

#### The Service Model: Proven From the Pew to the Pulpit

“Proven from the pew to the pulpit” is a term used for women who have a divine call from God in their quest to be acknowledged as equals of male counterparts in Christian leadership. Commencing by serving in hospitality, janitorial work, children’s ministry, Sunday school teaching, or clerical duties is fundamental to the servant-leadership labyrinth for women in Christian ministry in some mainline denominations. The servant-leadership labyrinth refers to women serving in a myriad of positions in the pew to prove worth, leadership ability, loyalty, value and consistency before taking on a

---

<sup>4</sup> Alice Eagly and Linda Carli. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*, 199.

leadership position in the pulpit. This leadership labyrinth is commonly observed in African-American Pentecostal churches.

Subsequent to acknowledging the call of God to preach after serving faithfully in other capacities of the church, women seem to hear a continuum of baritone voices from the nineteenth century and parts of the twentieth century. These voices suggest that women are to remain silent and be given little leadership authority, if any at all, unless their call is unmistakable through their ministry in the pew.

Crediting female pioneers in ministry for clearing a path, African American journals supportive of women in ministry suggest that women approaching ministry from the pews must remain dauntless, compared to noted apprehension in times past. Women who have sat in the pews and waited for their turn must not only maneuver through patriarchy and traditions but also encounter a labyrinth of challenges, hindrances and obstacles to highest leadership positions, including ordination.

### *Ordination*

Some marginalized women, called by God, seek ordination, which is the highest level of recognized leadership authority in several mainline denominations, Christian organizations, and ministerial alliances. The process and ceremonies of ordination vary by religion and denomination. Ordination is a process that includes being proven from the pew, working faithfully in several capacities of the church, and being elected by presbyters who have observed and acknowledged servant-leadership qualities. Furthermore, when an individual is in this process, certain catechisms and interviews are conducted that vary from one organization to another. Once this process is completed, the individual is consecrated or set apart as clergy to administer ceremonial rites and

sacerdotal duties. To this end, some women leave the faith in which they were raised to believe in or take daunting measures to achieve ordination. They face the threat of being ousted by the church and ultimately excommunicated.

Carol Kuruvilla of the *Huffington Post*<sup>5</sup> reports that Rev. Georgia Walker, a former Sister of St. Joseph, was ordained in a ceremony that was not recognized by the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City–St. Joseph, and will likely be excommunicated. Still, the sixty-seven-year-old says she was not nervous. The ordination ceremony was conducted by Bishop Bridget Mary Meehan of the Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests. Although the national organization claims to train and ordain women as priests, it is not recognized by the Vatican. The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a decree stating that women who attempt to become priests would be automatically excommunicated by the church. In 2013, Pope Francis reaffirmed canon law by stating in an interview that the door to women's ordination has already been closed.<sup>6</sup>

In summary, from the pew to the pulpit usually involves a desire for ordination but as a model this doesn't always work! Some people work hard and are faithful to ministry, church protocol and policy and still do not get the acknowledgment or recognition they deserve. It is a practical model for any denomination, reformation and Christian Association. There is a measuring tool that graduates an individual from laity to

---

<sup>5</sup> Carol Kuruvilla. "Kansas City Catholic Woman Becomes Priest In Ordination Ceremony Repudiated By Church". *Huffington Post*: 1, accessed January 19, 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri\\_n\\_6419442.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri_n_6419442.html).

<sup>6</sup> Carol Kuruvilla. "Kansas City Catholic Woman Becomes Priest In Ordination Ceremony Repudiated By Church". *Huffington Post*: 1, accessed January 19, 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri\\_n\\_6419442.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri_n_6419442.html).

leadership and from leadership to the next highest position in the church. In some churches it is education, skill, tenure and knowledge of church polity. However, promotion to leadership is never a guarantee. And for the next generation of African American female leaders, it is practical, it is teachable but not always attainable.

### Musimbi Kanyoro on Feminist Theology and Gender Justice Model

The Rustenburg, South Africa Apostolic Faith Mission Church (AFM) and the Methodist Church of South Africa (MCSA) struggle and the plight of women in ministry continues to be examined to learn the strategy and methods utilized to overcome barriers and challenges as these women recognize the call of God on their lives.<sup>7</sup> Reviewing the lives of fifteen ordained women, this study highlights the strategies and paths these women used to successfully overcome patriarchy, social systems, gender injustices and governments controlled by men. The findings indicate that women's ministries are not taken seriously and are not fully supported by the church. Women's ministries are still struggling with the issues of partnership as a result of the church not trusting women to be good leaders.<sup>8</sup> Within the study, patriarchy is noted as the fundamental cause of the marginalization of the women in the AFM church. The study, however, celebrates that women are resisting patriarchy despite the challenges they are encountering inside the church. Women realized that patriarchal structures were formed by one gender to

---

<sup>7</sup> Selokela, Occinah. "African American Women Overcoming Patriarchy: A Study of Women in Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) Church in Rustenburg, South Africa." (Ph.D. diss., University of KwaZulu – Natal, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Kanyoro, Musimbi. *Feminist Theology and African Culture in Violence Against Women*. (Nairobi, SA: Action Publishers, 1996).

institutionalize the perceived inferiority of women before men, as a vast number of stereotypical generalizations have been passed from one generation to another:

Among those stereotypes, they include that: to be born a woman is an inferior status; women are Eve incarnate; a girl-child is a little piece of property; men are entitled to women and women and men are not equal: God ordained men to be superior to women from the very beginning; sin came into the world as a result of the weakness and embedded wickedness of women; and that women are fragile and cannot be leaders.<sup>9</sup>

Natalie K. Watson, the author of *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology* asserts that the history of the church globally has shown that women have consistently been treated as outsiders, mainly on the grounds that they were born women.

After the Reformation, some churches that considered themselves as “the Word,”<sup>10</sup> allowed women to preach in some countries and not in others. Some churches that put emphasis on sacraments have rejected women’s participation in leadership on the basis of the assumed impurity of women’s bodies or the understanding that Christ, who is the foundation of the Churches’ priesthood was male.

Watson’s study demonstrates that effectiveness of women resisting a governmental or social system as a unit, versus individually, which becomes a viable strategy to overcome barriers systemically proven to hinder women from achieving positions of leadership.

Musimbi Kanyoro in *Feminist Theology and African Culture in Violence against Women* emphasizes that “any pattern of discrimination, domination or oppression is

---

<sup>9</sup> Kanyoro, Musimbi. *Feminist Theology and African Culture in Violence Against Women*. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Watson, Natalie K., *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*. (Sheffield Academic Press, New York, NY, 2002), 4.

contrary to God's justice."<sup>11</sup> Kanyoro's model is to work for gender justice at the policy and practice levels:

The question a feminist ecclesiology has to answer is not whether or not women ought to "leave" the church or "stay," but how is it possible to rethink what it means to be "church" within a theological paradigm which aims at reconsidering the basics of Christian theology and practice in feminist terms. This study heralds these women are not ignoring the problems that they are currently facing in the church but they are showing that they are using those struggles as a ladder towards their success of being fully recognized as human beings.<sup>12</sup>

Kanyoro's study highlights that while gender justice is enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa and in the declared statements of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA), in practice gender justice receives minimal attention in this church. The existing "gender policy" of the MCSA, essentially a recommendation, suggests equal representation of women, youth and men at every level of Church leadership. Since this "policy" is embedded in the terminology, Kanyoro's study argues that a gap continues to exist between policy and practice in the MCSA. Consequently, Kanyoro's idea of using struggle as a ladder to "close the gap" has been effective.

Musimbi Kanyoro's strategy of using struggles as a ladder continued to unearth the reasons for the marginalization and exclusion of women, even though the MCSA's purpose is to be a place of healing and transformation and its gender policy is meant to deter such marginalization and exclusion. Hence, Kanyoro suggests the development of transformative models that define "the church" that promote healing and transformation

---

<sup>11</sup> Musimbi Kanyoro, *Feminist Theology and African Culture in Violence Against Women* (Nairobi, SA: Action Publishers, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Selokela, Occinah. "African American Women Overcoming Patriarchy: A Study of Women in Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) Church in Rustenburg. South Africa." (Ph.D. diss., University of KwaZulu – Natal, 2005), 9.

of the MCSA. It is here where the hope for gender-healing in addition to the aspiration that this study and its strategy will permit “one more female voice” to be heard.

Kanyoro’s ideology of using the struggle resulted in more women entering into secondary academies, which include Bible colleges, seminaries, and universities, since the twentieth century. Given the plight of the world—the evils in every society, injustices, discrimination, racism and sexism—a paradigm shift is required that includes the next generation of women who have ability, experience, exposure and a call from God to minister his kingdom message, which is the gospel of Jesus and his redemptive love amid societal ills.

In summary, Kanyoro’s important model may not help the next generation of women if policies for gender equality don’t exist in the church. When there is a gap between policy and practice, the next generation of female leaders will continue maneuvering through a labyrinth that never allows them room to rise to ministry leadership in the church. Also, someone working in a complementarian environment versus an egalitarian environment this model is not the best fit, it still will not work. Gender injustices, patriarchy and governments that are mostly controlled by men will be the barriers for the next generation.

#### Webb’s Redemptive Hermeneutics Model

William Webb, author of *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* introduces the term “redemptive movement hermeneutic.” Webb’s argument on the creation-fall-redemptive hermeneutic suggests that the “theological basis for a redemptive-movement hermeneutic is rooted in two

crucial considerations: the authority of Scripture and the wisdom of God.”<sup>13</sup> “What we should live out in our modern culture, however, is not the isolated words of the text but the redemptive spirit that the text reflects as read against its original culture.”<sup>14</sup>

Consequently, Christians, especially female leaders aspiring for leadership positions, should not become gridlocked with the solitary words of the Scripture, resulting in the missed reapplication of the redemptive spirit that originally produced the Scripture.

#### *Redemptive Hermeneutics and Contextualization*

Movement within the women texts is profound when the biblical account is read against its surrounding culture. The overbearing strength of patriarchy and its abuses were often horrific in the ancient world. The Bible, though by no means eliminating all patriarchal abuses and injustices, certainly moves in a moderate direction.

#### *Redemptive/Static Hermeneutic Comparative*

Apostolic and beyond, a redemptive-movement hermeneutic has been a vital component of the historic church. A critical element of a redemptive movement hermeneutic is the notion of movement. Christians seeking to apply Scripture should examine and analyze the movement between the biblical text and its surrounding social context. Conversely, a static hermeneutic does not interest itself in discovering movement. Static hermeneutic “is primarily interested in exegeting the text as an isolated entity.”<sup>15</sup> Steering clear of specific words in a Scripture, Webb continues that a static

---

<sup>13</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 55-56.

<sup>14</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 55.

<sup>15</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 55.



hermeneutic “selectively disregards entire passages of text,”<sup>16</sup> which may present a formidable challenge for generating balanced, church leadership policy when using a static lens for hermeneutical interpretation. Though a static lens may seem more committed to the Scripture, “perceptions are not always reality.”<sup>17</sup>

For example a static hermeneutic would result in supporting slavery through biblical texts like, 1 Timothy 6:1-3, that says,

Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.

“Even more tragic than that, in arguing for or in permitting biblical slavery today, a static hermeneutic takes our current standard of human application --- it’s the application that seeks to understand the isolated words of the text but places a far greater interest in discovering and applying its spirit.”<sup>18</sup>

It is essential to know that much if not all of Scripture is written in the masculine voice. Webb introduces a “definition and concept to a redemptive movement hermeneutic which captures the most crucial component of the application process as it relates to cultural analysis: namely, the need to engage the redemptive spirit of the text in a way that moves the contemporary application of the text beyond its original application framing.”<sup>19</sup> Hermeneutics allows for the nonverbal and verbal communicating of

---

<sup>16</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 55.

<sup>17</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 55

<sup>18</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 55-56.

<sup>19</sup> Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, 30.

Scripture. Keeping faithful to the authenticity of the text, while communicating the message, should not change the context culturally when one is applying timeless truths. God clearly included women in his plan of redemption; this inclusion does not place restrictions on her or her role in Christian ministry. Her leadership and gifts are just as important as other roles as wife, mother, or caregiver.

Because the Bible is about God's image and his redemption of humankind, the model of redemptive hermeneutic could be applicable when discussing gender, roles, and leadership in the church. Over time, the language in Bible translations sounds exclusive of women when the speaker and listener do not contextually "differentiate man (*male – aner*) or humanity in general (*anthropos*)."<sup>20</sup> As one studies the ancient text and considers revelation and modern applications, there will be tensions that Christian leaders will need to wrestle with respectfully.

In summary, this model is an important hermeneutical model, although it does not inform practice, unless in the context of delivering a sermon, for example. Webb's model arms women aspiring for leadership positions, with examination methods that yield balanced and clear interpretations of Scripture that are faithful to the original text. However, Webb's model fails to prepare a younger generation with the 'how' to successfully navigate the labyrinth using redemptive hermeneutic movement alone against barriers such as sexism. Examination and interpretation methods will prepare an aspiring leader but this knowledge does not guarantee the penetration of any glass ceilings alone – practice will be necessary.<sup>21</sup> With barriers that continue to exist, as with

---

<sup>20</sup> Alice P. Mathews, *Preaching That Speaks to Women*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 160.

<sup>21</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*. (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007).

sexism, to successfully negotiate a labyrinth, a younger generation will need sound hermeneutics that results in an informed theology and practice.

### **Conclusion**

Examining these models, all four have much to offer in creating a sound and solid model collaborative but not as a single entity for the next generation of African American females that aspire to utilize their leadership skills and abilities to expand and share the gospel with the world.

Each model offers certain elements that help to foster the growth and recognition to leadership positions in the church. However, in researching each of these models, Eagly and Carli present a labyrinth paradigm that captures well the trajectory of this generation more so than the glass ceiling. The momentum of maneuvering around barriers, through twists and turns, is different from looking up at a ceiling, not knowing the invisible restrictions. However, in the church a stained glass ceiling is more appropriate due to the inability to see existing barriers

The Service Model, from the pew to the pulpit, is difficult to determine the “when and if” of acceptance in Christian ministry and leadership regardless of the measuring tools that are used. The rise to being the first or considered for ordination, which is one of the paths to positions in the upper echelons of the church, sometimes gets overlooked by leadership. Depending upon the leadership position, it gets awarded to the male counterpart.

The gender inequality and how women are viewed biblically, for centuries have given traditionalists leverage that implements policies that are not practiced. When the church should be embracing the oneness of God as it pertains to both men and women

working together in leadership positions, it excludes and restrains women from leadership at a certain point determined by the church, Christian organizations, denominations or reformations.

Others, men who are leading in upper echelons of the church will need to accept or acknowledge redemptive hermeneutics and contextualization of Scripture that permit women to lead and to have authority. Leaders and congregants must understand that God is more image-driven than gender-dysfunctional. It is essential for current leaders to prepare the coming generations to work graciously with those who live with and accept a static hermeneutic that perpetuates barriers. This study does not promote this concept as a requirement in ministry but merely desires to bring awareness of the mental, emotional, and physical obstacles that must be negotiated as one seeks to lead without diminishing “the potency of spiritual force.”<sup>22</sup> History has proven that for those who are prepared mentally, emotionally, and physically with a sound hermeneutical understanding, there exists a greater opportunity to lead above stained glass ceilings. The two most viable models to be considered would be the labyrinth and service models. These models have something to offer African American females of the next generation but each one by themselves would have to have adjustments made to accommodate and help facilitate a solid “how to” model. This is the reason why this thesis is important, to develop one solid model specifically designed to help the next generation of African American females negotiate the labyrinth.

---

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Skidmore-Hess and Cathy Skidmore-Hess, “Dousing the Fiery Woman: The Diminishing of The Prophetess Deborah.” *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 31 (2012): 3.

## CHAPTER 4

### PROJECT DESIGN

#### **Rationale**

The purpose of the study is to learn relevant strategies used by African-American women who have successfully navigated the labyrinth to penetrate the stained glass ceiling in the African-American church in order to reach the highest level of leadership in their denominations, reformations and or organizations. An additional purpose is to study the specific and needed tactics used to mentally, emotionally and intellectually prepare for negotiating the labyrinth in the African-American church. In addition, the purpose is to learn if any models or curriculum exist for young African-American women aspiring and attempting to negotiate the leadership labyrinth in their denomination or reformation as a female in leadership. Finally, this study seeks to gain from the interviewees' responses enough data with details, strategies and ideas to construct a solid working model and curriculum for training the next generation of young women in maneuvering the labyrinth.

#### **Description of Project Methodology**

“Qualitative research is based upon the observations and interpretations of people’s perceptions of different events and takes a snapshot of the people’s perception in a natural setting.”<sup>1</sup> The project’s research design is qualitative and utilizes an interview approach. This study attempts to develop and build theory grounded in the data from interviews. “Grounded theory means that the theory will be generated on the basis of

---

<sup>1</sup> Shahid Khan, “Qualitative Research Method: Grounded Theory”, *International Journal of Business Management* 9, no. 11 (2014): 231.

data; the theory will therefore be grounded in data.<sup>2</sup> Using interviews as the data collection form, grounded theory permits studying an action, process or interaction among individuals in addition to analyze through open coding.<sup>3</sup>

### **Sample Population**

The present study reports on interviews of five African-American female leaders that have successfully navigated the leadership labyrinth. The research participants are visible, noted female leaders from religious denominations/reformations. In order to recruit interviews, women were reviewed by listening to audio visual clips of their preaching and teaching, attending conferences to meet them, calling their offices and introducing the research project. A letter was created to invite women in ministry leadership to be a part of the study. Introductory emails were sent to African-American female leaders from three distinct sources: (1) a list of twenty-five influential female leaders, found in Ella Pearson Mitchell's book: *Those Preaching Women, Volume 4*;<sup>4</sup> (2) Women and Leadership Conferences that I attended to network and glean information and (3) from membership in a Christian organization able to recommend participants who would be interested in the study. From these sources, women who have negotiated the labyrinth to reach the highest level leadership position would be selected as final participants in the study. From the interviewees, three out of five have been observed and over the last fifteen and twenty years observed how they negotiated the labyrinth.

---

<sup>2</sup> Shahid Khan, "Qualitative Research Method: Grounded Theory" 227.

<sup>3</sup> Shahid Khan, "Qualitative Research Method: Grounded Theory" 226.

<sup>4</sup> Ella Pearson Mitchell, *Those Preaching Women*: Vol. 4, (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2004).

Beginning with twenty-five women, five interviews were completed for this study. Due to challenging schedules and unavailability, seventeen of the twenty-five women could not participate. Of the remaining eight, three women agreed to participate, though unexpected obstacles would prevent their participation. Dr. Estrela Alexander, visionary and president of William Seymour College, was actively engaged in the launching of this institution preventing her participation. Dr. Gina Stewart would also agree to participate. With great effort, a partial interview began but could not be completed due to Dr. Stewart's demanding ministry schedule and academic pursuits. Finally, Bishop Violet Fisher agreed to participate prior to international travel, though she would later become ill after serving on a missions trip to India. Her temporary illness prevented her participation in the study.

The participants selected are ordained, African-American females between the ages of forty and seventy-five years of age, who have obtained a Master or Doctorate degree from an Ivy League school or prominent seminary, and have fifteen or more years of Christian experience. Participants are current female leaders that have successfully navigated a labyrinth and serve or have served in the upper echelons of the African-American church. A strength of this sample is the diversity of the vocations and backgrounds of these African-American women leading at the highest levels in their organization, denominations or reformations. Their interviews are included because they have experienced the marginalization of women in the African-American church but have still reached the highest level of leadership. Moreover, the five women are representative of different age groups and geographic locations, which adds depth and value to the

research as the opinions included do not belong solely to one age group or geographic location.

### **Brief Description of Participants:**

- A. **Rev. Dr. Debra Haggins:** Dr. Haggins is the first female chaplain at Hampton University in its 140 years history. She also directs the school's Religious Studies program, handling all religious affairs for the university. In addition, she pastors the HU Memorial Church. She will also serve as the first female executive secretary and treasurer of the Annual HU Minister's conference, the largest gathering of interdenominational African-American clergy in the world.
  
- B. **Rev. Dr. Carolyn D. Showell:** Dr. Carolyn D. Showell was consecrated the first female Bishop in the Global United Fellowship, a global Ecumenical fellowship. She received the B.A. degree from Goucher College (Towson MD), the Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary (New York), and the PhD in Counseling Psychology from the Carolina University of Theology.
  
- C. **Rev. Dr. Teresa Snorton:** Dr. Snorton is a Presiding Female Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church. She's earned a B.A. degree from Vanderbilt University, a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, a Master of Theology in Pastoral Care from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a



Post-Graduate Certificate in Patient Counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

**D. Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil:** Dr. McNeil is an ordained clergy person in the Evangelical Covenant Church. She received a B.A. degree from Rutgers University, (New Brunswick, NJ); the Master of Divinity degree from Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, CA) and the Doctor of Ministry from Palmer Theological Seminary (Wynnewood, PA). She has served as professor in Reconciliation Studies in the School of Theology at Seattle Pacific University since 2011, with more than twenty-five years of experience in the field of racial, ethnic, and gender reconciliation. Dr. McNeil is an author, speaker, consultant, and president of Salter McNeil and Associates. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Wycliffe Bible Translators, USA.

**E. Rev. Kimberly Moore:** Pastor Moore is the first female to serve as a Senior Pastor in the Gaston County Baptist Association. She received her B.S. degree in Business Administration from Lander University (Abbeville, SC), the Master of Divinity degree in Pastoral Studies from Gardner Webb University, (Boiling Springs, NC). Pastor Moore is the Senior Pastor of Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church of Gastonia, NC. Her election to the pastorate and ordination in 2004 the marks a historic event in Gaston County.

## Instrumentation and Data Collection

### Interview Protocol

The interview questions were developed following an extensive review of the literature on noted women's beliefs on negotiating labyrinths to visible leadership positions resulting in twenty-eight questions. Below is a sample of the interview questions. Interview questions were developed using Sally Helgesen's methodology used in *The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership*. Some questions based upon Helgesen are:

1. When did you discover "your voice" on the following levels: locally, regionally, nationally and now at the highest level of your organization or being the "first" or both?
2. Describe your distinctive voice and how often did it change, if it changed as you maneuvered the labyrinth?
3. In your opinion do you see young women today aspiring for this level of ministry/career ... and how would their single/married status affect their movement?
4. What might the archetype of tomorrow's female leader look like?
5. How did you reach this leadership position? Talk to me about the process.
6. Being at the highest level...or the first, how do you see yourself now reflecting on the journey?

Secondly, the questions are categorized in a way that flows from response to the next question. In essence, a semi-structured approach was used to ask these questions and some unplanned follow-up questions. Third, networking with women, serving in

leadership positions helped me to refine questions further. For a complete list of questions see Appendix A.

A panel of two leading, degreed executives and pastors, who successfully navigated labyrinths to leadership were asked to review the questions. They have greater than 20 years of leadership experience and were not participating in the study, resulting in some changes in wording and the number of questions asked to each participant. Consequently, each participant was asked ten of the twenty-eight questions. Second, a pilot study was conducted by administering the interview questions to degreed executives and leaders from a younger generation, leading visibly, in local areas. No additional changes were made to the interview questions.

#### Interview Schedule

The interview instrument consisted of 10 open-ended (semi-structured) questions. Interview data was collected during a span of 1 year. Participants were interviewed for approximately 30 minutes to an hour. Interviews were conducted by telephone and Internet-Google Hangouts, and audiotaped with notes and later transcribed onto a laptop computer. Subsequent to completing the semi-structured interview, the results were analyzed for themes.

#### Data Analysis

The interview data was analyzed using a constant comparative method<sup>5</sup> to determine emerging themes from participants. Reading and re-reading the data assisted in identifying the themes and larger categories that will help determine what the

---

<sup>5</sup> Hennie Boeijs, "A Purposeful Approach to the Constant Comparative Method in the Analysis of Qualitative Interviews", *Quality and Quantity* 36, no. 4 (2002): 391.

trajectory could be for the next generation of women in ministry and leadership positions. Insights into challenges and success factors were gained that could inform labyrinth navigation preparation techniques and savvy strategies to be used in penetrating the stained glass ceiling in the African-American church denominations, reformations, and Christian organizations. The results are considered trustworthy because the interview responses yielded similar themes.

### Demographics of Participants

Three participants are visible leaders in the African-American church in the Northern, Southern, Western and Eastern regions of the US. The regional breakdown was as follows: West (1); South (1) East (1) and North (2). Two of the African-American female leaders surveyed were in leadership positions other than the church (as shown in Table 1, Demographic Variables for Final Interview Participants), though initially starting in the church as a visible leader.

**Table 1 Demographic Variables for Final Interview Participants**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Female</b>	5 (100%)
<b>Educational Level (Highest level attained)</b>	
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	0 (0%)
<b>Master's Degree</b>	1 (20%)
<b>Doctoral degree (Completed or pursuing)</b>	4 (80%)

**Table 1 Demographic Variables for Final Interview Participants**

<b>Age</b>	
<b>20-30</b>	0 (0%)
<b>31-40</b>	0 (0%)
<b>41-50</b>	1 (14%)
<b>51 – 80</b>	4 (86%)
<b>80 or &gt;</b>	0 (0%)
<b>Years of Experience in Ministry</b>	
<b>1-2</b>	0 (0%)
<b>3-8</b>	0 (0%)
<b>9-14</b>	0 (0%)
<b>15 or &gt;</b>	5 (100%)
<b>Years of Experience Leading in Ministry</b>	
<b>1-2</b>	0 (0%)
<b>3-8</b>	0 (0%)
<b>9-14</b>	0 (0%)
<b>15 or &gt;</b>	5 (100%)
<b>Leadership Platform</b>	
<b>Church</b>	4 (80%)
<b>Other</b>	1 (20%)

**Table 1 Demographic Variables for Final Interview Participants**

<b>Vocation</b>	
<b>Pastor</b>	1 (20%)
<b>Academic Scholar</b>	2 (40%)
<b>Bishop</b>	2 (40%)
<b>Ordained</b>	5 (100%)
<b>Region</b>	
<b>North</b>	2 (40%)
<b>South</b>	1 (20%)
<b>East</b>	1 (20%)
<b>West</b>	1 (20%)

\*Note: The denominations represented in this study include Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME), Global United Fellowship (GUF) an Ecumenical Fellowship, Baptist and Evangelical.

### **Conclusion**

The findings from the interviews yielded five major themes that will be discussed in context in chapter 5 and suggest a means to navigate the labyrinth into leadership roles as an African-American female: the boys club still exists; you must be prepared; focus on holiness, developing Christian character and having integrity; clarify your theology and be collaborative – don't be top down.

## CHAPTER 5

### OUTCOMES

#### **Analysis of the Findings**

Based upon a qualitative methodology, this study focuses on a particular problem utilizing a data collection method of interviews. In addition, the literature review will also shape results because these models can provide useful methods and strategies to navigate labyrinths to rise to the highest level of leadership. Several key publications authored by noted female African-Americans who have penetrated a glass ceiling and five leading African-American women serving visibly above the stained glass ceiling in African-American churches form the foundation on which this research has been built.

#### **Learning from Voices of African-American Women**

Five African-American women leading at the highest positions in their organizations, denominations or reformations share the principles necessary to understand how to navigate the labyrinth as an African-American woman.

#### *Interview #1: Dr. Debra Haggins*

When maneuvering the labyrinth in the African-American church, Dr. Debra Haggins suggests women should not compete with a man on a man's terms. Serving as Hampton University's first female Chaplain in a 140-year history and Pastor of Hampton University Memorial Church, Dr. Haggins asserts that neither can a man compete with women on women's terms. The suggested approach is to come to the foot of the cross where all ground is level:

When addressing a stained glass ceiling, she notes that women, while looking up at the glass ceiling, learn to plan and strategize because you can see it, though you can't touch it or get to it. Being on this side of the stained glass ceiling gives you

time to plan. One has time to strategize, not if, but when arriving there, what's the best portal for the individual to get there.

It is important to rely on a strong foundation of an ever – changing, always available God, who is consistent. Though people, fads and events in society change quickly, theology provides stability for the individual and the people served. If personal theology is unstable, vacillating from one belief to the other one there's nothing solid to stand on. Hence, she disclosed a great love for theological education, where it all begins for her.

Second, be committed. Be sure that this is what the Lord has called you to do. Moreover, this young woman must be compassionate, genuine and authentic. She has to lead in all of her womanness. She's got to be in her womanness, not a male copy. She has to be able to operate in her womanness, not being ashamed of being a woman in a position. I don't want to try to look like a man or try to speak like one. I can do this as the vessel God made me... It has been a certain quiet strength and resolve to knowing that God called you so come hell or high water I'm go all the way with God you know.

Dr. Haggins suggests that the next generation should operate from an informed theology.

More than just female leaders, the next generation should understand that women have been called by God. Called by God, female leaders must understand the one who made the call and the paradigm out of which He has called her. Hence, the next generation of women must be prepared. They must be prepared educationally, intellectually, socially and politically aware. A number of individuals enter ministry (not necessarily with blinders on), but notice only the glamorous side of it; one should, however, be prepared for the lows and highs.

Crediting consistency and a strong work ethic, Dr. Haggins also notes that on occasion the stained glass ceiling is penetrated by someone on the other side versus using one's own efforts to break through. Someone noticed her diligence, hard work and consistency while working to complete tasks that created the opportunity to enter the highest level of leadership.



*Interview #2: Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell*

The study's second leading African-American female is also a "first." Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell serves as the first female Bishop of Global United Fellowship. Currently Bishop Showell oversees the areas of Operational Programmatic Structuring, The Women's Department, Christian Education, and the Women's Protection Council. Bishop Showell, also a certified licensed therapist and pastoral counselor, suggests that women at the helm will result in Christendom returning back to the foundational principles of Godliness and holiness:

I do not believe that the glass ceiling is really broken, but takes on a different appearance that no longer is a glass ceiling but something else, though it stands and represents the same thing. There is a real entity called the boys club; they still gather, they still meet. They still call out our names. They still make the decisions about whose next in line; that they are the ones who open and shut doors. They really decide who they are going to raise up to be next, next, next, next, next. So what you do, you don't teach the glass ceiling, but you teach them to be the greatest and the best they can be... until. There cannot be a real good conversation unless you're in the room.... an intelligent one unless you're in the room. Even if you are not in the room physically, they will come and talk to you and get your opinion, ideas and thoughts. Though you might not be in the room but your thoughts will be in the room, your prayers will be in the room and your proposal will be in the room. It doesn't matter. You are in the room. The truth of the matter is nobody can really run that thought the way you can. So your presence, that is why the bible says "your gift makes room for you". My gift can make the room and I do not have to be in the room.

No, I'm not satisfied being the only ... I'm glad to be the first but I can't be the only. The men are not going to give us the training we need, we have to create our own.

Bishop Showell asserts that female leaders will return back to the major tenets of the Faith with a new level of sophistication. However, though a new level of sophistication will form, Bishop Showell believes that the "boys club" still exists. It is imperative that next generation leaders understand that inclusion in decisions does not always equal acceptance. Women must know the difference.

The women of the next generation should and will have watched the paradigm of the predecessors that has been created and found where it does not work and where it does work. The next generation of leaders must take the good from the predecessors and build upon it. In fact, it will be relevant to the age they serve. However, for any of this to become reality, Bishop Showell suggests that next generation leaders of the church must be well rounded, educated, equipped, well informed and God-fearing to accomplish it. This will emerge only as female leaders create their own training.

*Interview #3: Bishop Dr. Teresa Snorton*

The study's third leading woman serves as a "first" female Bishop in the Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, Bishop Dr. Teresa Snorton. Bishop Snorton urges women not to utilize the strategy of waiting to avoid taking risks or making decisions:

Second, voice is critical, in addition to knowing one's strengths and weaknesses. Rehearsing, practicing, and praying are important tasks before moving forward. Have a support group and people who will tell you the truth are essential. Take time for self-care and reflection. The worst mistakes are made when you are tired, distracted or overwhelmed. Consequently, this leader has become more confident and trusting of her voice.

She shares meditation and reflection helped her to sort "through the intellectual and emotional dimensions of the experience and make intentional decisions that would guide her through difficult situations and decisions."

Though taught by maternal voices, that had been victimized through domestic violence, to be silent, her feminist and womanist voices, learned in seminary, helped her healing process. Though she appreciated the choices of her maternal influences, she noticed that she had other choices. "I also saw their strength more clearly once I made sense of their choices." Finally, she shares all women need to take the positive lessons from their role models, but seek to find other role models to fill in the gaps.

Promoting preparation, Bishop Snorton asserts it is essential to take advantage of opportunity when it presents itself. Next generation leaders must be able to move forward in faith even when one cannot predict the outcome of an unexpected opportunity

to rise to leadership. Moreover, next generation leaders must believe that they are strong enough to survive whatever consequences of an opportunity presented.

Second, developing a trusted voice, in the presence of an honest support group will provide next generation leaders an essential tool vital for intelligent participation in leadership environments with male counterparts. Additionally, confidence in a developed voice, maintained via self-care, protects the leader from the inevitable mistake of leading from an overwhelmed and distracted thinking. Consequently, next generation leaders, serving at the highest level of their organizations must ensure that self-care is a priority to ensure that their thinking and voice remain clear, leading to sound, solid decisions.

*Interview #4: Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil*

The study's fourth leading African American female is a hybrid, leading in religious and educational platforms, Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil. Dr. McNeil, an Associate Professor of Reconciliation Studies in the School of Theology at Seattle Pacific University and Director of the Reconciliation Studies Minor program, suggests that younger generations should consider being bilingual and have business acumen. Being bilingual and possessing business acumen are vital as female leadership at the highest level often leads to communal impact. Younger generations must take note of the impact of their leadership:

Whenever women are given micro-financing roles women are educated. Women use their power for the community not just for themselves. To empower a woman is to empower a community! Many institutions are likely to give women micro – financing loans than men because men will buy a business because they want their business to be successful, make money and earn an enormous reputation. But when women make money, then the power gets multiplied. There is some communal nature of women leadership that not only makes her successful, but her

success becomes a broader community base. This is the kind of leadership we are looking for in the future.

Consequently, when women are given this opportunity, we need not copy what our male predecessors have done, I think we must be willing to lead in a new way and say that the way forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that you need female approach to leadership that will highlight not personal success but communal success and revitalization.

Dr. McNeil notes that a woman leads differently from her male counterpart. She further contends that women are collaborative. Younger generations should acknowledge that the day of the super star is over. We are not looking for the next great leader with a large platform. This is about bringing resources together, so that when a church is accepted, (once the resume of the female minister is considered and the church makes an offer) skills are bridged together to create networks of support. She insists the day of aggrandizement is gone. Because women have a spirituality that seems to be for this socialization or a pre-disposition towards compassion, Dr. McNeil advocates that women must harness this energy as women are uniquely poised to lead in this way and without apology.

*Interview #5: Pastor Kimberly Moore*

The study's fifth African American is a leading pastor. Pastor Kimberly Moore is the "first" female to serve as a Senior Pastor in the Gaston County Baptist Association:

The industry of ministry should know you by your integrity, not your testimony. Furthermore, they should know that you're business minded. When I was called here, they were concerned about my business ethics. They were concerned whether or not if I could conduct a business meeting and assemble a business plan. We can be so emotional and want to charismatically navigate our way through and that's not going to work in this season neither will it work in the next generation. One often has to learn to make it happen with or without the support of the other pastors in the area.

Pastor Moore believes that younger generations must maintain a solid work ethic, be well rounded and remember that "you are your brand or product." "Every decision

made in some manner impacts your reputation, no matter the platform.” Pastor Moore suggests that though an individual is gifted, there is no tried and true way to be successful in this male dominating industry with a spiritual gift alone. Above all, integrity is essential in addition to having good character as a woman ascends to greater levels of leadership. The development of these will sustain her, her name and her brand as the next generation of leaders advance toward the highest level of leadership.

### **Findings: A Suggested Model**

How do we help the next generation of African-American women negotiate the labyrinth and rise to leadership positions in the African-American churches? From these interviews, five themes emerged of how to navigate the labyrinth to the highest positions of leadership: (1) The boys club still exists; (2) You must be prepared; (3) Focus on holiness, developing Christian character and having integrity; (4) Clarify your theology; and (5) Be collaborative – Don’t be top down.

#### **“The Boys Club Still Exists”**

“There is a real entity called the boys club; they still gather, they still meet.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Bishop Carolyn Showell, women must acknowledge and recognize that women have not reached full inclusion at the highest level of leadership.

It is important to understand the culture and the environment in the highest echelons of leadership. Though male leaders may inquire for advice or counsel from female leaders, this is not indicative of inclusion among male circles of leadership. Though female leaders can be grateful for inclusion in some manner, acknowledgement of the boys club will prevent unrealistic expectations. Dr. Brenda McNeil says: “nothing has really

---

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell, interview by author, Charlotte, NC, January 9, 2015.

changed with the boys club.”<sup>2</sup> With church structures that still do not hire women as much as they hire men, they don’t want women to the degree that they call a male pastor, you’re really rolling the dice to use a secular metaphor, you’re really hoping for the best when you go to seminary as a woman because it is more difficult to get hired and men have been chosen for the kinds of positions like pastoring where there is some kind of security through a denomination and gives him benefits. “I think the mere fact that we live under this stigma and it’s still a “boys club” ”... listening to some of the stories from some of the other sisters who are called and in seminary having an issue of being ordained, some are even not allowed to stand in the pulpit. So it’s not even a black or white thing. It’s across the board that the “boys club” always trumps in the words of Pastor Kimberly Moore.<sup>3</sup> Bishop Teresa Snorton says: “I am aware of being excluded from the all-male conversations that take place and the information that is shared between men in men-only settings. (i.e., men’s bathroom, locker room, etc.).”<sup>4</sup> Some of this is intentional, but mostly done out of habit because not much if anything has changed with the “boys club.”

#### “You Must Be Prepared”

“Next generation leaders must be prepared. Rehearse, practice, and pray are important tasks before moving forward.”<sup>5</sup> Bishop Teresa Snorton suggests that to be successful in moving forward towards the highest level of leadership, it is important to be

---

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil, interview by author, Charlotte, NC, December 12, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Pastor Kimberly Moore, interview by author, Gastonia, NC, January 10, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Dr. Teresa Snorton, interview by author, Charlotte, NC, January 14, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Dr. Teresa Snorton, interview by author, Charlotte, NC January 14, 2015.

prepared prior to considering a move of any type. Developing strengths and overcoming weaknesses generates a necessary confidence as next generation leaders will attempt to navigate a labyrinth.

From this confidence emerges a voice that should be allowed to mature in the audience of mentors and support groups who are honest about its impact. Consequently, the next generation leader can stand firm and mature as a leader due to preparation and accountability. Considering that male leaders may examine a woman's work ethic from afar to determine if she will be the next visible leader to penetrate the glass ceiling, it is imperative that she be prepared to participate and articulate on those levels competently.

Dr. Debra Haggins emphatically believes: "She (the aspiring female) must be prepared educationally... She must be intellectually aware... She must be socially aware... She must be politically aware. Just aware and prepared."<sup>6</sup> Once the woman puts her hand to the plow, she needs to be sure and prepared for the Lord's work during the lows and the highs of ministry. According to Dr. Brenda McNeil the next generation of female leaders must be "educated... one who has book knowledge as well as spiritual, integral, someone who stands boldly and have confidence. One who can stand and preach and administrate in whatever setting she is placed in ... She is not bound to one denomination or another, she is not bound to one gender or the other. Sometimes they (our male counterparts) have the tendency to think we can only minister to each other. She has a voice for all genders and all races, denominations. She is a well- rounded and well balanced female."<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 15, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil, interview by author, December 12, 2014.

“Focus on Holiness, Developing Christian Character and Integrity”

“Integrity is essential.”<sup>8</sup> Pastor Kimberly Moore asserts that the next generation female leader will not survive in a male dominated circle by spiritual gift alone. Above all of this, it is essential that female leaders maintain a holy lifestyle and Christian character. Christian character and integrity will create an influential name and reputable background in an audience of male counterparts that may not respect a gift though experienced or seasoned. Consequently, every decision made should mirror sound Christian principles, integrity and a mature character if there is any expectation to rise to the highest position of leadership. “They will take the good from us and they will build upon it.”<sup>9</sup> Dr. Showell asserts the leaders of the church in this next generation will return back to the foundational principles of Godliness and holiness; will return back to the major tenets of the Faith on a new level of sophistication ... Their attitude is going to be “for God I live and for God I die”... they will care nothing about titles, positions, organizations... their focus will be for the saving of souls, of lost people which develops their love for God and Christian character.

“Clarify Your Theology”

“She must be committed, be prepared and operate from an informed theology.”<sup>10</sup> According to Dr. Debra Haggins, operating from an informed theology that evolves from commitment and preparation is vital to an ascension into higher levels of leadership. As next generation leaders ascend into the highest level of leadership, it is essential to

---

<sup>8</sup> Pastor Kimberly Moore, interview by author, Gastonia, NC, January 10, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell, interview by author, Charlotte, NC, January 9, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, Charlotte, NC, January 15, 2015.



understand a theological paradigm. She should have a clear theological understanding of women in ministry. Women leaders who have been called by God, must be clear about the call and the paradigm. To operate authentically as a female and not a carbon copy of a male, next generation's understanding must be mature, meaning her theological understanding must be able to withstand challenge and examination while leading visibly among male counterparts. Without a solid foundation for theology, the next generation of leaders will be unstable. According to Dr. Brenda McNeil and what she has observed with women in ministry, some are still grappling with their theology – God's call and man's acceptance of the call. "I can be that"<sup>11</sup>; women are seen in ministry who have acknowledged and accepted the call now must understand sociological implications of an economic down-turn, the decline of the organized church and its inability to attract a younger generation of people who trust the church and want to be participants in it to effectively minister. Knowledge is power and available through seminary and the presence of God.

#### “Be Collaborative – Don't Be Top Down”

“The day of aggrandizement is gone.”<sup>12</sup> “It is imperative that female leaders prepare to collaborate to be successful because women lead differently than men.”<sup>13</sup> Because women flourish as collaborators through the merging of resources and knowledge,<sup>14</sup> generating alliances and collaborative networks will provide the necessary

---

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil, interview by author, December 12, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil, interview by author, December 12, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007).

support essential for expansion and growth in organizations. “Some theorists believe, women have a unique and particular leadership style,”<sup>15</sup> says Dr. Debra Haggins.

“Leadership style of women is more life-affirming as I’ve seen it. It is heart, head and hand together. I believe it will be a better integrated church when the hand (workers), heart (people who are emotional, people who feel and are compassionate for other people) and then head, people who are intellectual work collaboratively together that displays a Christ-like model to the world.”<sup>16</sup> Bishop Teresa Snorton suggests this thought: “I do believe that women integrate qualities and characteristics from their various roles into one another better than men.”<sup>17</sup> Having the ability to be nurturing while being a decisive leader that suggests she is inclusive of her environment in the home and the workplace that includes the church. Men, in Bishop Snorton’s opinion, compartmentalize and often exclude their qualities from blending into the leadership role that is inclusive but mostly exclusive operating from a hierarchal perspective.

### Answering the Questions

This study addresses the question about how younger generations can be aided to negotiate the labyrinth by creating models specific to the obstacles and challenges existent in the African-American church experience. Elements and principles from other pre-existing models will provide additional preparation useful in leadership, but are inadequate alone for this particular leadership quest. The models developed from the hybrid of existing models and the proven experiences of leading African-American

---

<sup>15</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 15, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 15, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Bishop Dr. Teresa Snorton interview by author, January 14, 2015.

women at the highest level of their denominations, reformations or organizations will produce a preparatory model that informs, prepares, teaches and trains younger generations of African-American female seeking to rise to leadership in the African-American church.

### **PUMPS**

Based on interviewed results and already existing models, this study recommends creating an integrated model entitled *PUMPS*. This acronym will encompass the leadership lessons and tenets for navigating the labyrinth in the African American Church. This model will assist younger generations of African-American women.

*PUMPS* stands for:

- **Prepare** and operate from an informed theology while preparing to cope with the emotional and mental impact from the ascension to the highest level of leadership; be well versed and well educated for the level of leadership that you are aspiring to achieve.
- **Understand** the environment, the timing and obstacles prior to attempting to navigate the labyrinth. Accept that your entry into leadership may not occur in the reformation, organization and denomination that you have served in years past.
- **Manage** the expectations for reaching the top tiers of leadership. Be prepared to meet each opportunity with skill and determination at every turn of the labyrinth. Master the art of strategic decision making by learning from the approaches of your predecessors.

- **Persistence** that develops networks which form strategic alliances and solid support while maneuvering the labyrinth.
- **Serve** diligently with a firm and consistent work ethic at each level, understanding that consistency and reliability may gain recognition while penetrating the ceiling in a nontraditional manner.

### *PUMPS: The Model*

#### Prepare

Being prepared to navigate the labyrinth is a consistent theme evolving from the interviews from the five visible, female African-American leaders. Female leaders, who serve alongside male counterparts, emphasize that mental/emotional preparation for unexpected challenges, preparation from an informed theology and being well rounded are essential to an opportunity to penetrate the glass ceiling.

Whether the “first” or an influential leader with visibility, female leaders should clearly understand and be prepared for emotional/mental preparations necessary to address and approach traditional barriers that exist, namely the “boys club.”<sup>18</sup> The “boys club,” generally exclusive of female leadership, represents a division between men and women based upon sexism. Failure to acknowledge the value of female leadership, the “boys club” invites the counsel of women without acknowledging the full values of female leaders’ worth and personhood. Because of the emotional/mental challenge of acknowledging that a “boys club” may prevent an ascension to leadership, it is essential

---

<sup>18</sup> Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell, interview by author, January 9, 2015.

that the next generation of female leaders operate from an informed theology. “Operating from an informed theology, knowing what you believe,”<sup>19</sup> potentially insulates the next generation from the emotional scars of lowered self-worth that may evolve due to an exclusion from leadership solely based upon gender or biblical interpretation.

The “P” in the *PUMPS* model suggests the importance of preparing the next generation of female leaders with an informed theology by teaching them William Webb’s redemptive movement hermeneutic. The redemptive movement hermeneutic prepares female leaders with the methodology and understanding necessary to “interpret the Scriptures with the redemptive spirit that the text reflects as read against its original culture.”<sup>20</sup> Consequently, while next generation leaders await their opportunities to negotiate the labyrinth to their desired position of leadership, they will mentally be prepared to address any scriptural challenges from an informed theology and emotionally healthy spirituality.

### Understand

Proper assessment and evaluation is essential to developing successful strategies to accomplish goals, according to Alice Eagly and Linda Carli in *Through The Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*.<sup>21</sup> An improper assessment and evaluation may invite additional, unexpected obstacles or increased detours. *PUMPS* seeks to prevent the next generation of African-American female leaders from inviting

---

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 15, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> William Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 55.

<sup>21</sup> Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* (Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007).

additional challenges due to improper assessment by teaching them how to properly evaluate each level of leadership they are aspiring to reach and its impending obstacles. *PUMPS* will accomplish this by sharing how to plan, prepare and assess the environment.

Second, *PUMPS* will present methods and tactics explaining the proper and effective development of strategy to approach each component of an environment. Subsequent to explaining development of effective strategy, *PUMPS* will impart, through experienced leaders how to effectively implement strategies alongside a recognition of the appropriate timing to ascend toward the next level of leadership. It is also important for the next generation to understand their rise to leadership “may not evolve from the reformation, organization and denomination that one has served in years past,”<sup>22</sup> according to Bishop Carolyn Showell. Strategically, this component suggests that understanding is fostered through the use of collaborative teams and cooperative learning. In cooperative learning, all contribute (leaders and learners) to learning environments to ensure meeting predetermined goals. Subsequent to generating an environment that fosters a cooperative learning approach, collaborative teams comprised of multigenerational leaders with varied leadership strengths, learning styles, and competencies will partner with younger generations of female, African-American leaders to demonstrate how to effectively evaluate an environment and make an accurate assessment of a labyrinth. The use of multigenerational leaders or cross-age leadership allows learners to receive individualized instruction and work with role models to safely eliminate knowledge gaps and eliminate leadership deficits that may prevent successfully navigating a leadership labyrinth. The opportunity to reach the highest level of leadership

---

<sup>22</sup> Bishop Dr. Carolyn Showell, interview by author, January 9, 2015.

may evolve from within entirely different organization. Understanding, assessment and evaluation are essential to approaching the labyrinth at the proper time with the appropriate strategy, with the knowledge that a strategic approach may need to be adjusted for unexpected opportunities.

### Manage

The “M” of the *PUMPS* model encourages next generation leaders to manage their expectations for reaching the top tiers of leadership with patience. Bishop Teresa Snorton and Dr. Debra Haggins suggest using time as a tool to be prepared to meet each opportunity with skill and determination at every turn of the labyrinth. While waiting for an opportunity to penetrate the glass ceiling, use the time to determine strategic plans and execution strategies once on the other side of the glass ceiling, as planning time no longer exist after the goal is reached by a leader.<sup>23</sup> Hence, it is imperative for women to manage their expectations of how quickly leadership opportunities will occur to prevent an attempt to ascend too quickly or approach the labyrinth with an inaccurate expectation in this section of the training, women will be encouraged to master the art of strategic decision making by studying the approaches of the predecessors.

### Pursue

Bettye Collier-Thomas’ *Jesus, Jobs and Justice: African American Women and Religion* advocates strength through unity.<sup>24</sup> Thomas supports women overcoming barriers via organization and collaboration. Collaborative efforts generate a support

---

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 9, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Bettye Collier-Thomas, Bettye. *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion*. (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1986).

system to help pioneering women cope with the seemingly insurmountable challenges as they approach barriers of sexism and racism in their quest for justice. Additionally, Alice Eagly and Linda Carli in *Through The Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders* echo and extend Bettye Collier-Thomas's thought by suggesting that collaborative networks and support groups should be developed at each level of leadership. As a result, the second "P" in the *PUMPS* model teaches the next generation leaders how "to collaborate to develop networks and support systems"<sup>25</sup> as coping mechanisms that help manage counterproductive emotions, thoughts and actions while attempting to successfully navigate the labyrinth. Effective collaborative network and support systems can reignite the confidence necessary to continue pursuing, with repeated efforts, to ascend to the highest level of leadership. The reoccurring strength that develops through collaboration and networking is rarely seen in a single individual, though possible as seen through pioneering women. Because of the rare display of persistence in approaching positions of leadership where women are underrepresented, it is essential that women develop core relationships to ensure that their pursuit and quest to become leaders are not derailed due to inadequate or nonexistent support systems.

### Serve

The final component of the *PUMPS* model is the "S," indicating a willingness to serve. It's important that women serve at every level of the labyrinth with a consistent work ethic, understanding that "consistency and reliability may get you noticed penetrating the ceiling"<sup>26</sup> in a nontraditional manner. Consequently, *PUMPS* expects to

---

<sup>25</sup> Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil, interview by author, December 12, 2014.

<sup>26</sup> Dr. Debra Haggins, interview by author, January 15, 2015.



share the benefits gained from serving at each level of the labyrinth prior to leading visibly on that level.

The service component of *PUMPS* instills the importance of service as a result of loyalty and faithfulness to God - loyal to His calling. Whether administrative, leadership development or social, embracing preparatory assignments produces skill sets later used in visible leadership opportunities. The author experienced this when developing the Leaders of Destiny Training Model<sup>27</sup> and working with different churches in the city. This encounter was one of the most eye opening experiences due to learning visibly by trial and error how to collaborate for growth and expansion. Being unaware of those observing work ethics and tracking accomplishments, as Dr. Debra Haggins also experienced, but exposure and promotion to greater levels of leadership would soon follow. Consequently, an ascension from the pew to the pulpit or into leadership was made possible via serving faithfully and loyally.

A second benefit that *PUMPS* will share is that service provides an opportunity to observe and listen to other men and women in leadership and authority. Observation will educate the next generation of female leaders when to speak, when to be silent and how to speak by noting the methods and practices of others. *PUMPS* participants will be trained to observe and note any changes in the “atmosphere” as an influential woman enters a room from the time she says “hello” until the time she leaves the room. Equally, when involved in forums or meetings, *PUMPS* participants will learn to respect the leader’s position, never being assertive until invited through a question (e.g., “what do you think?”). Furthermore, *PUMPS* will instill learning to respond with a suggestive

---

<sup>27</sup> Author, Wanda D. Frazier- Parker.

tone versus an absolute tone to prevent offending male counterparts or being categorized as too hard or aggressive while in male dominated environments. Though responding with suggestions may be considered suppressive or oppressive, it is a learned behavior from watching predecessors until opportunity is created to lead without losing femininity.

The final benefit from the service component of the *PUMPS* model is the affirmation that can be gained during times of service. To receive affirmation that one is on the right path is critical. During the early stages of tenure, affirmation may emerge from either gender. While affirmation is important, *PUMPS* will prepare the next generation for an absence of affirmation due to jealousy.

#### *Talk-Teach-Train*

The delivery vehicle for the *PUMPS* model is an infrastructure entitled Talk, Teach and Train. Though potentially synonymous terms in other disciplines, talk, teach and train will adopt nontraditional approaches. Emerging from the history of African-American slaves who learned from talking to each other due to exclusion from academic settings, “Talk,” utilizes an identical principle of women sharing the reality of their challenges, struggles and experiences with younger generations about their paths to the highest leadership position in African-American churches to provide balanced perspectives. “Teach” is indicative of sharing principles based on a learning model that can be used to structure decisions and gain strategic insight that lead to the highest leadership positions. Finally, “Train” suggests that these women may gather collectively to participate, engage and network synergistically with their predecessors to put theory into practice (in a preparatory environment), permitting younger generations to explore the impact of practices, theories and paradigms before utilizing them in an attempt to

reach the most visible layer of leadership in African-American churches. Essentially, *PUMPS* is the content and Talk, Teach, Train is the delivery model.

### *Collaborative Summits*

Due to their inexperience, it is important to permit younger women to explore their callings and learn in a safe place. A collaborative summit is recommended for the generation to be introduced to the model, to learn it and practice its principles before attempting to navigate any labyrinth. Collaborative summits reach, impact and empower a greater population of women rather than attempting to reach them via local churches, church denominations, reformations or organizations. Through a memorable and instructional environment that provides ample opportunity to observe, interpret and make relevant application of what is necessary to learn, younger generations of women can be prepared to navigate the labyrinth successfully.

### **Future Research**

Further research can explore whether this model developed for younger generations of African-Americans is effective in preparing them to navigate the labyrinth. Though a curriculum may provide a structured environment, it is unclear whether the cost of a curriculum and its focus will encourage younger generations to pursue the highest levels of leadership.

This thesis project suggests that the next generation of African-American women can successfully navigate the labyrinth by learning principles from the leading pioneers and from other models, integrated into the *PUMPS* model. Though barriers continually exist, the development of the *PUMPS* model prepares and positions the next generation to

strategically approach and overcome barriers that once hindered, challenged and or delayed their predecessors from reaching the highest level of leadership.

## APPENDIX A

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

Questions formulated from reading *The Female Advantage - Women's Ways of Leadership*,  
*Sally Helgesen* (September 2012)<sup>1</sup>

1. Is the church a piece of the world; interrelated by politics, history, economics etc.... and if so, what will it look like with women at the helm over the next 10 years?
2. Was the hierarchy of the organization inclusive or exclusive in disseminating information to you as woman in leadership?
3. In your opinion do you see young women today aspiring for this level of ministry/career ... and how would their single/married status affect their movement?
4. As it pertains to this generation of young women, what would you say or how would you give definition to the nuance of how they should lead in the context of social, economic, and spiritual change?
5. What might the archetype of tomorrow's female leader look like?
6. As you've maneuvered the labyrinth and even broke through and/or penetrated some glass ceilings, what's your advice or counsel to women like myself and those I'm training?
7. When did you discover "your voice" on the following levels: locally, regionally, nationally and now at the highest level of your organization or being the "first" or both?
8. Do you think this is a true or fair statement, that women place themselves in the center of their organizations rather than the top?
9. Being at the highest level...or the first, how do you see yourself now reflecting on the journey?
10. Are there any regrets or mistakes that you can elaborate on that will help in this research and the development of curriculum that will foster the growth of other young women?

---

<sup>1</sup> Sally Helgesen, *The Female Advantage – Women's Ways of Leadership* (New York, NY: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc. 1990).

## APPENDIX B

## BIOGRAPHIES OF INTERVIEWEES:

**Hampton University's First Female Chaplain and  
Executive Director and Treasurer for the  
Hampton's Ministers Annual Conference**



Dr. Debra L. Haggins  
October 13, 2008

**Hampton, VA** - Hampton University has named the Rev. Debra L. Haggins as the university's first female chaplain in the institution's 140-year history. As chaplain, Haggins will serve as pastor of the HU Memorial Church, director of the Religious Studies Program and handle all religious affairs for the university. She will also serve as the first female executive secretary of the Annual HU Ministers' Conference, the largest gathering of interdenominational African-American clergy in the world. "This appointment makes a strong statement to the world that we are all called and can be chosen for any particular task, so we need to be prepared to be sent wherever we are needed,"<sup>1</sup> said Haggins. Haggins aims

---

<sup>1</sup> Alison L. Phillips, "Haggins Named First Female Chaplain", *Hampton University*: 1, accessed on January 15, 2015, [http://www.hamptonu.edu/news/connection/archive/october\\_2008/debra\\_haggins.html](http://www.hamptonu.edu/news/connection/archive/october_2008/debra_haggins.html).

to boost interfaith ministry and student involvement on campus, provide pastoral care and counseling, and expand the Memorial Church into “a viable entity on campus.”

While Haggins’ appointment will hold its place in HU’s history, HU President Dr. William R. Harvey selected her because he felt she was the most qualified for the position.

“The addition of Rev. Haggins to our Hampton family is no doubt a historic measure in our institution’s rich history. Yet my decision to select her was based on her values and skills as a pastor and spiritual leader which she will bring to the HU community,” said Harvey.

“She exemplifies the ideals that Hampton University was built upon and I have only the utmost confidence that she will serve as a pillar of faith and leadership to our university.”

Haggins replaces Dr. Timothy T. Boddie, who now serves as the senior pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga. “I have only the highest confidence in Rev. Haggins to move the chaplaincy and all religious affairs of Hampton University to the next level,” stated Boddie.

Prior to her arrival at HU, Haggins served as the interim pastor of the historic Queen Street Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va. From 2002-2006, she served as associate minister and director of the women’s ministry at Mount Gilead Missionary Baptist Church in Norfolk. Prior to that, she served as assistant to the chaplain and faculty advisor to the Student Christian Association at HU.

Haggins has also had a successful professional career with the Virginia Beach City Public School System and the Norfolk Public School System. A native of Millen, Ga., Haggins earned a bachelor’s degree from Paine College in Augusta, Ga. She received a Master of Science in secondary school administration and the certificate of advanced graduate studies

from Old Dominion University. She earned a Master of Divinity in theology degree from The Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and is currently pursuing the Doctorate of Ministry degree from Norfolk Theological Seminary.





### **Bishop Carolyn D. Showell, Ph.D. <sup>2</sup>**

On July 18, 2014 Dr. Carolyn D. Showell was consecrated Bishop in the Global United Fellowship under the visionary leadership of Bishop Neil C. Ellis. Under his prelatore, Bishop Showell will serve as one of four vice presiding bishops of the fellowship. She will oversee the areas of Operational Programmatic Structuring, The Women's Department, Christian Education, and the Women's Protection Council.

Maintaining the spirit of excellence from her matriarch and patriarch, Carolyn is committed to being a life-long student. Carolyn was awarded a B.A. Degree from Goucher College in Towson, Maryland. She received her Master of Divinity Degree from Union Theological Seminary of New York, with a concentration in Psychology and Theology. She received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the Carolina University of Theology. Carolyn is a certified licensed Therapist and Pastoral Counselor. She was a scholarship recipient to Columbia University School of Business in New York City. There she studied the Management of Not-For-Profit organizations. She has worked as a consultant for AT&T in Racism and Cultural Diversity, a mental health specialist, a

---

<sup>2</sup> "About Dr. Showell", Official Website of Bishop Carolyn D. Showell, accessed January 9, 2015, <http://drcarolyndshowell.org/about-dr-showell>.

psychometrist for the Baltimore City Public School System, and a program and special projects developer for the Johns Hopkins School of Business and Administration.

Carolyn was one of four finalists (out of 13,000) chosen for HUD's Community Builders Program and received certification in Faith-based Economic Development from the Harvard University Summer Leadership Institute (SLI). After which, she returned as a member of the SLI teaching staff. She was later selected as a member of the Steering Committee of the Black Alumni/ae Network of Harvard University-The Divinity School. Presently, she is the founder of Transformed, Inc., a private Christian counseling and family support service agency. She is completing her dissertation for a second doctorate in Jewish and Rabbinic studies at the Baltimore Hebrew University and the Advanced Studies Program in Psychology at Loyola University.

She is the visionary and founder of God First Ministries, Inc. She has served as the instructor of the Old Testament at Howard University (Washington, D.C.) and Morgan State University. She is also the founder and president of The Women's Institute of Lifelong Learning (The W.I.L.L.).

Carolyn is an ordained minister in the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc. where she served as president of "the Sacred College," the leadership development arm of the organization. Presently she serves as the Chancellor of the School of Transformational Leadership. She attends First Apostolic Faith Church in Baltimore, Maryland where her brother, Bishop Franklin C. Showell, is the pastor and former Presiding Bishop of the Bible Way Churches. There she serves as a member of the Board of Presbyters. In 2012 Carolyn received the honor of being selected to serve on the Advisory Board of the Joint College of Bishops.

She is the recipient of numerous awards, honors, and scholarships. In 1999, 2002, and 2011, Carolyn was invited and awarded the privilege of addressing church leaders at the historical Hampton Ministers' Conference.

She has been selected as one of Baltimore's Women of Distinction as she is a member of many social organizations and serves on several corporate boards. Carolyn is a gifted and anointed speaker who serves as a church transformation consultant to many of our country's most dynamic ministries.

She conducts and coordinates conferences, workshops and seminars on leadership and human development, spiritual formation, church growth and transformation, and the creation of Faith-based initiatives. Showell is a much traveled and heavily sought after woman of God. Carolyn dynamically teaches and preaches God's Word as she lives and works empowered daily by His grace Being and Becoming His manifested glory.



### **Bishop Dr. Teresa E. Snorton** <sup>3</sup>

In the thirty-six quadrennial session and thirty-seventh General Conference of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church convening in Mobile, Alabama during June 26-July 4, 2010, five new bishops were elected. The Rev. Dr. Teresa Snorton was elected the first female bishop of the denomination. The theme of the General Conference was, "An Essential Church": Poised for 21st Century Ministry." Bishop Teresa Snorton is the Presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the CME Church, which includes the states of Alabama and Florida. She previously served as Presiding Bishop of the Eleventh Episcopal District, which included ten counties in Central and Eastern Africa.

She was the Executive Director of the national Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE) for almost twelve years prior to her election as Bishop. She is the former Executive Director of the Emory Center for Pastoral Services in Atlanta, Georgia and former Director of Pastoral Services at Crawford Long

---

<sup>3</sup> "The Rev. Dr. Teresa Snorton Is Elected First Female Bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church", BlackNews.com, accessed January 14, 2015, [http://www.blacknews.com/news/teresa\\_snorton\\_elected\\_bishop\\_cme\\_church101.shtml#.VO-RAgtGP8](http://www.blacknews.com/news/teresa_snorton_elected_bishop_cme_church101.shtml#.VO-RAgtGP8).

Hospital. She has been adjunct instructor in Pastoral Care at Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

She is a fourth generation, life-long CME. Her great-grandfather, father and uncle were all CME pastors and her grandmother was an active missionary. Her two sisters are also CME ministers. As an ordained minister in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, she was a former pastor in Kentucky.

Prior to moving to Atlanta, in addition to being a pastor, she was a Psychiatric Staff Chaplain in Louisville, on the adjunct faculty of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Kentucky, and on the faculties of the Patient Counseling Program at the Medical College of Virginia and the School of Theology of Virginia Union University in Richmond.

Bishop Snorton has a B.A. degree from Vanderbilt University, a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, a Master of Theology in Pastoral Care from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Post-Graduate Certificate in Patient Counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. Bishop Snorton is the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Miles College, Fairfield, Alabama, as well as the Chair of the Department of Lay Ministries of the CME Church. She serves on the Pan-Methodist Council and as Chair of the Family Life Committee of the World Methodist Council.

Bishop Snorton has been active on several boards and committees of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, including the Commission on the Concerns of Women in Ministry and immediate past President of the Chaplains Commission. She has been a

delegate to six CME General Conferences, is a former National Youth Conference officer, and a member of several committees in her region/annual conference, including the Joint Board of Finance, the Committee on Ministry, the Leadership Training School faculty, and the Coordinator of the Renewal Plan for the Second Episcopal District.

Bishop Snorton is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She has been a member of several boards and advisory committees related to interfaith dialogue, religion and health, and pastoral education.

Her awards include the Wayne Oates Pastoral Care Award from the Long Run Baptist Association in Louisville, Kentucky, a recipient of the B. Julian Smith Award from the Board of the Christian Education in the CME Church and a recipient of the Legacy Award of the CME Women's Missionary Council.

In 2010, she received the Fortitude Leadership Award from the East Point, GA chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, the Distinguished Service Award from the Racial, Ethnic, Multicultural Network of the ACPE, Inc., and the Distinguished Achievement in Research and Writing Award from the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

She is frequently a guest preacher at churches of all denominations and lecturer and speaker for hospitals, seminaries, conferences, leadership schools and retreats on religion and health, multicultural, ethical and gender issues, pastoral care and spiritual development. She is the author of several articles, chapters and book reviews on topics Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, *Women Out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multi-Cultural World*.



### **Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil <sup>4</sup>**

Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil is a powerful, prophetic preacher and thought-leader in the field of racial and ethnic reconciliation. She has more than 20 years of experience and speaks at conferences, on college and university campuses, and in churches around the world. Her mission is to inspire every mind and ignite every heart.

Brenda earned her bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, a master's of divinity from Fuller Theological Seminary, and a doctorate of ministry from formerly named Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, now Palmer Theological Seminary. She served on the staff of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a national evangelical organization that supports Christian outreach to students on college and university campuses, as the regional coordinator of multiethnic training.

In 1995, in response to her growing passion for authentic racial healing, Dr. Salter McNeil founded Overflow Ministries, Inc., a nonprofit, faith-based organization devoted to the ministry of racial and ethnic reconciliation. She continues this work through Salter

---

<sup>4</sup> “Brenda Salter McNeil: Get to Know Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil, One of our Gifted for Leadership Editorial Advisors.”, Christianitytoday.com, accessed December 12, 2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/gifted-for-leadership/2007/january/brenda-salter-mcneil.html>.

McNeil & Associates, LLC, a racial and ethnic reconciliation-focused speaking, training, consulting, and leadership-development firm based in Chicago, Illinois.

Dr. Salter McNeil is also the coauthor of the book *The Heart of Racial Justice: How Soul Change Leads to Social Change* (InterVarsity Press, 2005). Through her speaking, teaching, and writing, Brenda boldly declares a vision that unites, transforms, and brings healing to people from every tribe and every nation. Together with her husband, Dr. J. Derek McNeil, and their two children, Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil stands at the forefront of an international movement to advance God's kingdom through the ministry of racial and ethnic reconciliation.





**Pastor Kimberly Moore <sup>5</sup>**

Pastor Moore is the Senior Pastor of Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church of Gastonia, NC. Her election to the office marks a historic event in Gaston County. Pastor Moore is the first female to serve as a Senior Pastor in the Gaston County Baptist Association. She gives God all the glory for the favor that is upon her life. She has a heart after God and He has given her to the church to serve as a messenger and an under-shepherd to His people.

Pastor Kimberly Moore is a native of Abbeville, South Carolina. She is a graduate of Lander University in Greenwood, SC where she received her B.S. Degree in Business Administration. She is also a graduate of Gardner Webb University School of Divinity where she received a Masters of Divinity Degree in Pastoral Studies. Currently, Rev. Moore is pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry from Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity, with a concentration in Christian Ministries. She is also a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Pastor Moore received her license to preach the gospel in August 1995 and was ordained a local minister in 2001. In 2004 she was ordained as an

---

<sup>5</sup> "Pastor Kimberly Moore.", Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church, accessed December 12, 2015, [http://www.embcgastonia.org/our\\_pastor.php](http://www.embcgastonia.org/our_pastor.php).

Elder in the Lord's church. Over the years God has allowed her to connect with phenomenal men and women of God across the country of whom she has been fortunate to glean from their wisdom and grow by God's grace.

God has truly favored her ministry and caused her name to be spread abroad. She is a highly sought after minister of the Gospel who has been boldly proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ with power and demonstration in church services, conferences and revivals across the United States. Her unique style of preaching has reached beyond traditional barriers and touched the lives of many, clergy and laity alike.

She has a heart for God's people and desires to see all saved, set free, and delivered. Because of this desire, she is the founder and CEO of Kimberly Moore Ministries, which is an outreach ministry committed to ministering to and restoring the whole person through Destiny Empowerment Classes, Ministry Mentoring Sessions, and Regional Conferences. Through this ministry many have been empowered to excel and live victorious lives.

She is an anointed vessel whom God has appointed as a Pastor, anointed as an Evangelist, and trained as a Teacher to speak a Word of Hope and Healing to the hearts of mankind. Pastor Kimberly Moore is a woman who represents the Kingdom by demonstrating spiritual integrity, maturity, and excellence. She is one that has certainly been "called to the Kingdom for such a time as this!"

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Holly Catterton, Deborah Hinkel, Joy Fagan, Robbie Castleman, and Susan Payne. "Two Views on Women in Ministry." *Christian Education Journal* (2006): 371-91.
- Andrews, William L., ed. *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women's Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century Religion in North America*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Becker, Carol. *Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- Belleville, Linda L., Craig Blomberg, Craig Keener, and Thomas Schreiner. *Two Views on Women in Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.
- Bilezikian, Gilbert. *Reclaiming the Church as Community of Oneness: Community 101*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about Women's Place in Church and Family*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2011.
- BlackNews.com. "The Rev. Dr. Teresa Snorton Is Elected First Female Bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal (C.M.E.) Church." Accessed January 14, 2015. [http://www.blacknews.com/news/teresa\\_snorton\\_elected\\_bishop\\_cme\\_church101.shtml#.VO-RAdgtGP8](http://www.blacknews.com/news/teresa_snorton_elected_bishop_cme_church101.shtml#.VO-RAdgtGP8).
- Boeije, Hennie. "A Purposeful Approach to the Constant Comparative Method in the Analysis of Qualitative Interviews." *Quality and Quantity* 36, no. 4 (2002).
- Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–1963*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 1988.
- Charlton, Joy. "Women and Clergywomen." *Sociology of Religion* 61, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 419-24.
- Christianitytoday.com. "Brenda Salter McNeil: Get to Know Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil, One of our Gifted for Leadership Editorial Advisors." Accessed December 12, 2015. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/gifted-for-leadership/2007/January/brenda-salter-mcneil.html>.
- Clinton, Robert. *The Making of a Leader*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988.

- Collier-Thomas, Bettye. *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850–1979*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 1998.
- . *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1986.
- Eagly, Alice H., and Linda L. Carli. *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*. Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007.
- Elaw, Zilpha. *Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, Ministerial Travels and Labours, of Mrs. Zilpha Elaw, an American Female of Colour: Together with Some Account of the Great Religious Revivals in America*. London: Charter-House Lane, 1846.
- Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church. "Pastor Kimberly Moore." Accessed December 12, 2015. [http://www.embcgastonia.org/our\\_pastor.php](http://www.embcgastonia.org/our_pastor.php).
- Ferguson, Scott. "Women Are the Backbone of the NAACP." *The Crisis* (2009): 52-55.
- Foh, Susan. *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1979.
- Ford, Donna, and Tarek Grantham. "Providing Access for Culturally Diverse Gifted Students: From Deficit to Dynamic Thinking," *Theory into Practice* 4, no. 3 (Summer 2003).
- Frederick, Marla. "Righteous Content: Black Women's Perspectives of Church and Faith. By Daphne C. Wiggins." *The North Star* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2005).
- Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. "My Mother's God Is Mine: Finally the Most Powerful Recognition of the Importance of Women to African American Religion." *The Journal of African American History* 96, no.3 (Summer 2011): 362-369.
- Harris, James Henry. "Practicing Liberation in the Black Church." *The Christian Century*, (June 13-20, 1990): 599-602.
- Hedburg, Nancy. *Women, Men and the Trinity: What Does It Mean To Be Equal?* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010.
- Helgesen, Sally. *The Female Advantage - Women's Ways of Leadership*. New York: Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1990.
- Kanyoro, Musimbi. *Feminist Theology and African Culture in Violence Against Women*. Nairobi: Action Publishers, 1996.

- Keener, Craig. *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992.
- Khan, Shahid. "Qualitative Research Method: Grounded Theory." *International Journal of Business Management* 9, no. 11 (2014), 224-233.
- Kroeger, Catherine, Mary Evans and Elaine Storkey, ed. 1995. *Study Bible for Women: The New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Kuruvilla, Carol. "Kansas City Catholic Woman Becomes Priest In Ordination Ceremony Repudiated By Church." *Huffington Post*: 1. Accessed January 19, 2015. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri\\_n\\_6419442.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/06/female-catholic-priest-missouri_n_6419442.html).
- Lee, Jarena. *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee: An Account of Her Call to Preach the Gospel*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1849.
- Mathews, Alice P. *Preaching That Speaks to Women*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Mitchell, Ella Pearson. *Those Preaching Women: Volume 4*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2004.
- Ngunjiri, Faith Wambura, and Baker, E. Ann-Cristo. "Breaking the Stained Glass Ceiling: African Women's Leadership in Religious Organizations." *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 5, no. 2 (April 2012): 1-4.
- Official Website of Bishop Carolyn D. Showell. "About Dr. Showell." Accessed January 9, 2015. <http://drcarolyndshowell.org/about-dr-showell>.
- Owens, Susie. *Soaring Above the Ceiling: Developing Successful Female Leaders*. Winston-Salem, NC: MacPublishing, 2014.
- Phrases, Sayings and Idioms. "Glass Ceiling Revisited." Accessed November 28, 2014. [www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin\\_board/22/messages/747.html](http://www.phrases.org.uk/bulletin_board/22/messages/747.html).
- Phillips, Alison L. "Haggins Named First Female Chaplain." *Hampton University*: 1. Accessed on January 15, 2015. [http://www.hamptonu.edu/news/connection/archive/october\\_2008/debra\\_haggins.html](http://www.hamptonu.edu/news/connection/archive/october_2008/debra_haggins.html).
- Pierce, Ronald W., and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis. *Discovering Biblical Equality – Complementarity Without Hierarchy*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
- Richards, Sue, and Larry Richards. *Every Woman in the Bible*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1999.

- Robert, Dana L. *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1992.
- , ed. *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers: Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.
- Selokela, Occinah, “African American Women Overcoming Patriarchy: A Study of Women in Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) Church in Rustenburg, South Africa.” Ph.D. diss., University of KwaZulu – Natal, 2005.
- Sims, Angela. “Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African-American Women.” *Journal of Religious Thought* 53-54 (1997): 154-55.
- Spencer, Aida Besancon, and William Spencer. *Joy Through the Night: Biblical Resources for Suffering People*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007.
- Steward, Margaret, David Steward, and Judith Dary. “Women Who Choose a Man’s Career: A Study of Women in Ministry.” *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1983): 166-73.
- Swartley, Willard M. *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation*. Harrisonburg, VA, Herald Press, 1983.
- Talmage, James E. “Women in the Scriptures: The Greatest Champion of Woman and Womanhood is Jesus Christ.” *Daughters in My Kingdom*, (October 2012).
- United States Government. *Federal Register: A Daily Journal of the United States Government*. Accessed August 4, 2014.  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/09/24/2013-21228/affirmative-action-and-nondiscrimination-obligations-of-contractors-and-subcontractors-regarding>.
- Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983.
- Watson, Natalie K. *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*. New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- Webb, William. *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- West, Gerald. *Contextual Bible Study*. Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, 1983.

White, Deborah G. *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894–1994*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1999.

## VITA

Wanda D. Frazier-Parker  
 Birthdate: April 19, 1959  
 Birth Place: Washington, D.C.

**ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS**

DMin, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA  
 Specialization: Effective Ministry to Women - 2January 2012 – May 2015

Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Formation, Columbia International University, Columbia, SC, 2007 - 2009  
 Thesis: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Women in Ministry

Associate in Business Administration, Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria, VA, 1979

**PROFESSIONAL PROFILE AND EXPERIENCE**

A results-oriented, self-starting educator, administrator and project manager with more than 20 years of highly developed leadership, problem-solving and decision-making competencies including: budgeting, research, personnel policies, staffing, performance appraisals, training and development.

**Wanda Parker Ministries, LLC, Charlotte, NC**

*Executive Director* (December 1975 – Present)

- Directs and manages all facets of the company's short-term and long-term goals, policies, procedures and initiatives.
- Works closely with the CFO to determine the operational budget and policies of the company in addition to creating the tone of the company culture, analyzing and retooling where necessary.
- Promotes and markets the firm by keeping a high public visibility.

**River of Life International Ministries, Asheville, NC**

*Interim Pastor* (January 2013 – October 2014)

- Provides spiritual and pastoral leadership to the membership.
- To regularly preach and teach the Word of God to the congregation.
- To oversee the administration and management of all areas of the congregation's ministry in consultation with the appropriate boards, committees and staff.

**Truth Tabernacle Ministries, Rocky Mount, NC**

*Instructor & Senior Executive Administrator* (October 1999 – October 2012)

- Led scholarly interpretation and study of the Bible and other religious works.
- Advised, counseled and mentored parishioners.
- Participated in faculty meetings as directed by the CEO.